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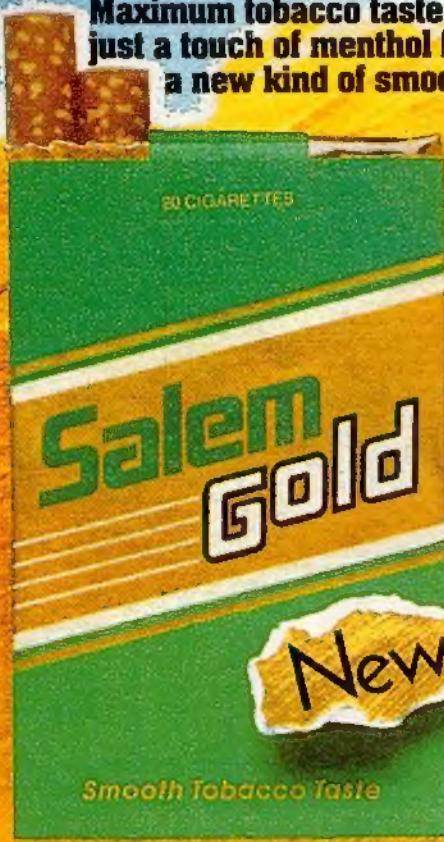
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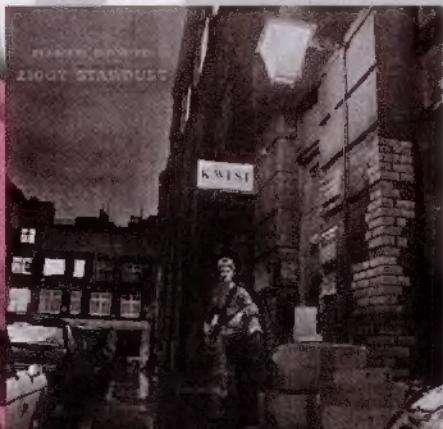


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July 1990

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TOP SPIN



Bis Young, Stay Pretty. Punk veteran and SPIN swimsuit model Deborah Harry (left) grips ecstatically at the back of her chair, while newcomer Jade 4 U flouts her new gloves. Summer begins on page 38.



when they came in and beat everyone to the ground.

And then I remembered who they reminded me of. They were the guards up in Middleton.

The ones who grabbed the giggling old ladies and threw them around when they giggled just a little too loudly.

The ones who justified their existence by keeping the different down.

The ones who delighted in holding the keys to the steel doors, and smiled a little too smugly when they locked you in.

—Legs McNeil

"Come on, we're going to see Grammy!" my mother used to say on Sunday afternoons and we'd all pile into the Rambler American station-wagon and head toward Middleton, Connecticut, where the state mental hospital was. Unfortunately, the state mental hospital also happened to be where my grandmother lived.

To all my friends, the term Middleton was synonymous with insanity. Like in, "If you don't stop playing with yourself, they're going to put you in Middleton." So when my mother would say, "We're going to see Grammy!" it didn't conjure up the most pleasant images.

"Hey Mom, why do they have bars on the windows?"

"This is where they put old people," she would lie.

"Hey Mom, why are the guards dragging that lady away?"

"Hush."

"Hey Mom, why is that lady in the straight jacket screaming in the cage?"

"I'll explain it all later."

Even though later never came, I knew something was up, I knew, even without knowing, that when other people went to visit their grandmothers, that they didn't have to go through guards and big steel doors, and sit in a huge common room with hundreds of giggling, crying, shaking, rocking and mumbling old ladies.

Somewhere, even at five years old, I knew my family was different. Maybe it was my Uncle Bill, who lived downstairs, next to the furnace, and always "borrowed" small airplanes from the Meridan Airport on the weekends to buzz the house. I'd be sitting at the dinner table looking for places to hide my mother's cooking when a plane would cut its engine over the house, and my mother would say, "Eddie, check and see if that's Uncle Bill . . ."

And I'd run outside, happy to be free of dinner, to see if the plane was waving its wings.

Or maybe it was the fact that by the

time I was 10, Mom was dating my grammar school janitor. Somehow I knew that having your crossing guard for dinner seven nights a week wasn't exactly the normal way of doing things, but after spending my young life asking questions that were never answered, I started to ignore them when they were asked of me.

"Hey, Eddie, is it true that Carl got drunk and burned down his trailer and that's why he's always at your house?"

And then the laughter.

See, it wasn't supposed to be like this. It was supposed to be like on "Father Knows Best." We even had a white picket fence around the house. Only when my father died when I was two months old, there wasn't much left of the insurance after they buried him. The only problem was that we lived in Connecticut, a place where the dads come home for cocktails after work and the moms always have enough time to bake cookies. But we weren't like that. It was embarrassing. But as I got older, I realized there were tons of refugees from the American Dream; that lots of people grew up falling through the cracks. Everyone had skeletons in their closets.

It was a relief when I finally ran away from home to New York's Lower East Side when I was 17. I'd finally found a place where the other refugees from mainstream America washed up. I was grateful that the place existed. Malcontents, homosexuals, drug addicts, mental cases, belligerents, every fuck up imaginable, and I was in heaven. Everybody you wanted to hang out with was here.

It made me proud to be an American. Here we were living in a country that allowed you to seek refuge, to live in exile within its own borders, without giving up your rights and citizenship. It really made me feel that the ideal of freedom was being honored. You really did have the right to be different.

But then along came the 80s, and

being different was no longer acceptable, and America, with the Yuppie in the vanguard, set out to gentrify the differences and consolidate America into one giant Holiday Inn lobby. Real estate became just too valuable, and suddenly the neighborhoods of refuge became the new targets in the war of gentrification.

The riots in Tompkins Square Park have been going on for two years now. Tonight, May 1st, 1990, it was because the cops decided the band Spy vs. Spy had played long enough in the park and the cops rushed the bandshell to get them off. Bottles were thrown, an even bigger crowd gathered, riot cops were brought in to put down the insurrection. Only this wasn't an insurrection, because this was our neighborhood. The band would have finished when it was time to finish. The people who live in the Lower East Side do so because they don't want anyone to tell them when to turn down the music. It's why they didn't all move to Westchester.

But the cops didn't get that. To them, all these skinheads and freaks and anarchists and rock'n'rollers were just a bunch of dirtbags who didn't deserve a place of their own.

You could see it in their faces

**The Company: Chairman of the Board: Stephen C. Swid
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Edited by Nathaniel Wice

Knowing your views on record labeling and Tipper Gore's PMRC [Topspin, May], it pains me to find fault in your magazine. I was appalled, when reading the last issue, to come across a full-page Coors beer ad. As I understand it, Coors gave Tipper the seed money for the PMRC. How can SPIN, in good conscience, accept ads from Coors? You are not practicing what you preach. How can we take you seriously when it is apparent that the almighty greenback carries the most weight? Was this just an oversight?

I don't want to point fingers and accuse you of hypocrisy, but you can understand my concern.

Ann M. Sanders
Sterling, Illinois

Editor's note: We appreciate your concern, but the truth is Coors didn't donate any funds to the PMRC and have gone on record as saying they do not support them, even ideologically. The Coors-PMRC connection rumor is the result of inaccurate reporting a few years ago in a rock'n'roll newsletter.

To the FCC Chairman:

I write in reference to the "Donahue" program being aired on CBS from three to four PM here in Tucson, Arizona, which opened with a Negro "rap" group singing explicit, sexually foul lyrics with abundant "F"-words (these words were "bleeped" but nevertheless musically present) and references to "filling her with milky . . .," etc. There are latchkey children who come home to see this kind of dung on our public airways, be it disguised as public concern or what have you, and since the beat is catchy, the children repeat the

words without benefit of adult supervision. It does very little good to repeat to those children to "just turn the TV off," as is the righteous hue and cry of libertine artists, when the damage has been done. I appeal to you, as Chairman of the FCC, to address this kind of material going out over public airways with your rightful authority and power. The rationale that to prohibit such garbage is "censorship" and erosion of free speech in this country has no validity. If it comes unbidden into my living room over a publicly sanctioned TV station, then MY PRIVACY and rights have been violated. My children and grandchildren will be subject to damage that the artists and TV people will not ever have to pay for, but we, the public, will.

Mrs. D.A. Nixon
Tucson, Arizona

Editor's Note: A copy of this letter was sent to Bob Guccione, Jr., after he appeared on the "Donahue" episode referred to, along with the following cover letter.

To Bob Guccione, Jr.:
With all your fast speech you will never impose on the American people the kind of absolute license you advocate in the interest of "art."

Mrs. D.A. Nixon

I noted that your article entitled "The Real PoMo" by Jill Pearlman in your April 1990 issue makes reference to MUZAK®. (We have recently written you regarding the same subject in an article entitled "Blue Light Special" by Nick Tosches in your March 1990 issue.)

Again, please be advised that MUZAK® is a registered trademark of Muzak Limited Partnership and should not be used as a generic word for background music.

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We appreciate your assistance in helping us protect our trademark by using it correctly in the future.

Thank you.

Leslie Ritter
Marketing Manager
MUZAK
Seattle, Washington

I am writing to take exception to several of the statements made about the remaining Ramones in Dee Dee's article

I "My Life as a Ramone," April], notably:

"They're greedy. Everybody lives so cheap and puts it in the bank."

In most circles living within your means and saving is called being frugal, not being greedy.

Greedy groups play Moscow for three days and get MTV to foot the bill. Since November, the Ramones have toured Australia, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Scandinavia, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway. Anyone who thinks they make a ton of money doing this has no idea how much it costs to transport tons of equipment and a road crew halfway around the world. They travel all over the world, without fanfare, to play for the kids. In Germany they reduced ticket prices for the East German kids so they could see the shows.

When they play the States, the Ramones play little towns as well as the big ones. Their tours are less than cost-effective, but everyone has a chance to see them. Don't be fooled by sour grapes—this is not a greedy band. This is a band that cares and that puts their fans first in more ways than I could ever mention.

Rick Johnson
Director—Product Distribution
The Record Exchange, Inc.
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Daina Darzin's "Multiracial Rock'n'Roll" [Flash, April] included a list of "heavy rock bands with non-Caucasian members" that were "spurred on" by the success of Living Colour. Half the list consists of acts who debuted long before Living Colour's push for success, i.e., Bad Brains, Death Angel, Soundgarden, Zeotrope, Suicidal Tendencies, Tony (not Toby) MacAlpine, and (I think) King's X. In fact, I think Bad Brains had a hand in spurring on Living Colour's push for success and acceptance as a black heavy rock band. Doug Pinnick's comments about black coalitions and "why make a big deal" of black culture were really disappointing. Black artistic visions like Vernon Reid's are not separatist at all, and are in fact positive and constructive.

And what's the beef with UB40's James Brown? It seems Mr. Fields, like too many staffers on SPIN, are totally intolerant of a non-Western point of view. Any criticism of America is met with such knee-jerked vehemence. SPIN considers itself the bad boy of journalism, and has run interesting articles on the shortcomings of American culture/society/politics. Why can't you accept the same from a foreigner? Why mock someone with politics left-of-center? Sometimes you sound like the very conservatives you criticize in your own pages.

This Frank Owen guy is great. First the great Chuck D interview [Public Ser-

vice, March], and now, finally an article on N.W.A [Hanging Tough, April] that cuts through white liberal media's fascination with the Ku Klux Klan's favorite rap act. I'm glad Mr. Owen gave Eazy-E enough rope to hang himself. His remarkable comments hopefully will discredit this Uncle-Tomming house-Negro rap act for good. N.W.A have really brought some big problems in the black community (and all communities) to the surface. They have had a polarizing effect in the hip hop community. The biggest disease around in the pop music scene is the one people like Red Alert Productions' Funkenstein is afflicted with: "They don't give a fuck, and that's why they're cool." That's cool like cold, cold like a corpse. And if Hank Shocklee produces Ice Cube's solo LP and it's just more of the same bullshit, then I'll know everything Professor Griff says about him being a snake is true. Keep going Frank Owen, your articles are candy in a store full of poison.

Before I go, thank you to Jill Pearlman for having the guts to give Professor Griff [Repentant Professor, April] a fair hearing, and a good interview. SPIN keeps getting better, and it keeps getting worse. I guess it's like a lot of things that way.

Scott Beadle
British Columbia, Canada

I commend your adventurous journalism and your desire to report controversial points of view. I am, however, concerned about your series of articles on AIDS. This series is written solely to promote the alternative opinion that HIV may not be the infectious agent responsible for AIDS, an opinion which exists despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. It is irresponsible in the face of such dire consequences to present only one side of scientific research because your readers may be lured into thinking they do not need to protect themselves from an infectious agent most medical practitioners today agree will cause AIDS.

Lori Chudacoff, Pharm. D.
Ventura, California

Editor's note: The AIDS column does not exist merely to propagate any one theory. Nor have we suggested that people do not need to protect themselves from infectious agents, HIV or otherwise. As for "overwhelming evidence," new evidence constantly supports the likelihood of other factors and circumstances causing AIDS, and cries for the debate to be kept open.

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FLASH

Edited by Frank Owen

Coming to America



Russell Young/London Features International

Leaving behind his band, his bachelorhood, and his Britain, **Lloyd Cole** begins the decade with a new perspective.

Lloyd Cole is my kind of man, the sort of guy who'll tell you if you've got lipstick on your teeth.

I first saw him on British TV's "Top of the Pops," looking brainy and singing "Perfect Skin." It was like having someone read a good book to you.

His music is still literate, but now he's writing more about what he sees around him. That's because now, after leaving the Commotions, he lives in New York.

In the song "A Long Way Down," from his debut solo album, *Lloyd Cole*, you hear a rainy London day turn into a big wide American sky.

New York's a good place for this man to be. He met his future wife at a horrible downtown club called MK. He has "friends," not people who "treat him as a 'rock star'"—an accessory to their lives, like an expensive car. Everybody's a celebrity in New York, so Lloyd feels like one of the crowd. He hangs out with the old boys at his local bar in Soho. He plays poker, chess and pool.

He finds the changing borders of New York neighborhoods fascinating, and the strange mix of people entertaining. He likes the sound of the street names. ("I finally got to mention Bleecker Street in a song. I always wanted to, but never knew where it was.")

On his new record he uses downtown New York semi-legends Robert Quine and Fred Maher, who were both Voidoids and in Lou Reed's band, and Matthew Sweet from Golden Palominos. Lloyd tried to recruit William Reid from The Jesus and Mary Chain, but William was too shy and didn't want to play in front of Quine.

He still writes about relationships and still has this cowboy swagger to his guitar that makes you feel he's certain of his step. He worries about recurring themes, but reckons he has at least 120 more angles on relationships to explore anyway. He says this with his tongue planted firmly in his chubby cheek.

After meeting him, I think I know him. I find myself wondering if he would like a certain book or film, you know...

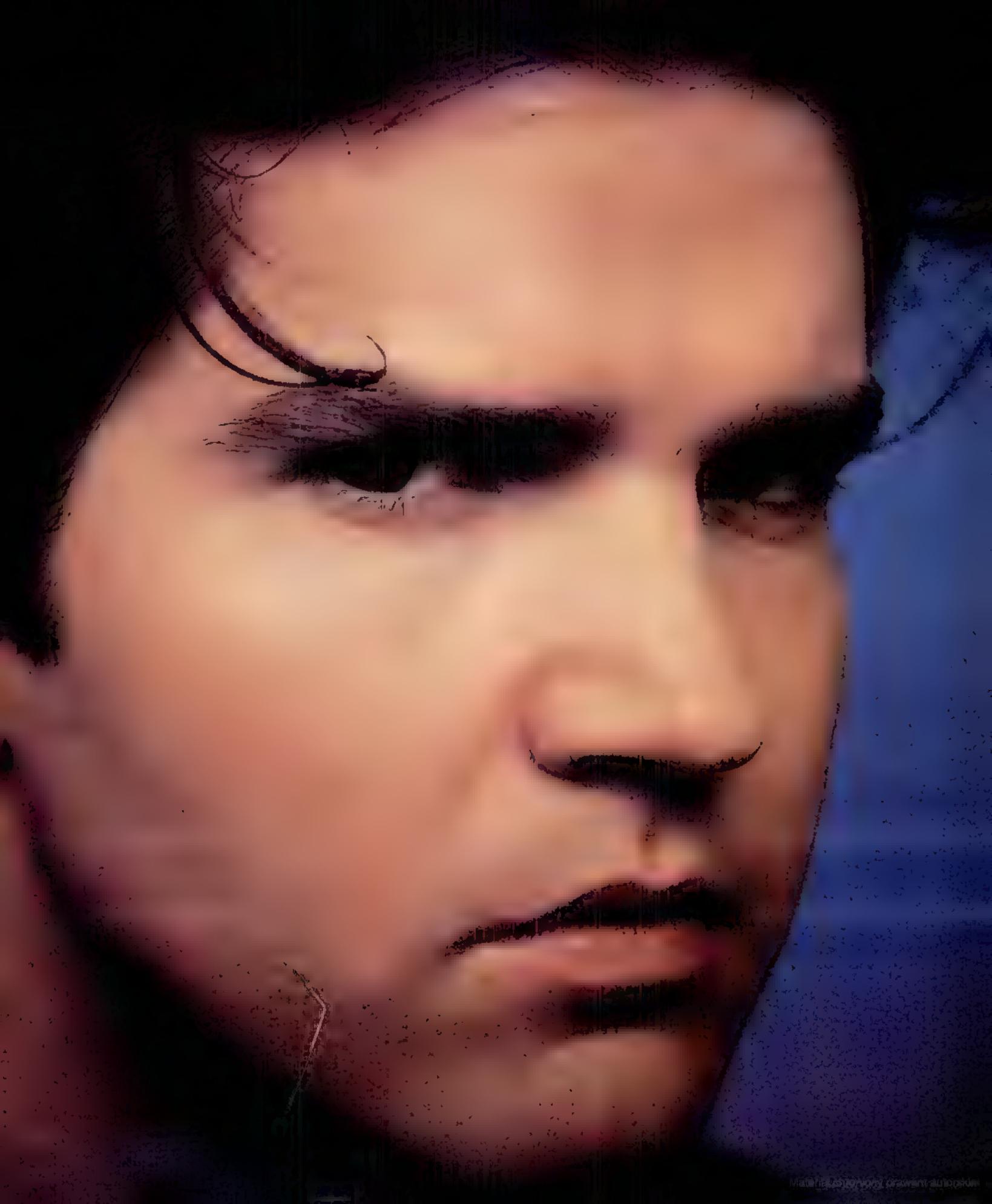
There's all this talk about Lloyd maturing: he says, "I've been working on my lower register," but he's always been the type of man I'd like to link arms with and walk around downtown. And he's content. He's not a "still haven't found what I'm looking for" type of guy. Lloyd Cole always knew what he could see. He's just looking for a new way of seeing it.

P.S. He likes amaretto, but only on his ice cream.

—Susan Hulme

Derek Ridgers/London Features International





HEAVY ROTATION



Staff Selections

Public Enemy *Fear of a Black Planet* (Def Jam/Columbia) Possessing a gravity and a breadth of vision that no other hip hop act can match, Public Enemy unleash the third album in their cryptic triptych. Avoiding the traditional pitfall of radical pop—long on militancy, short on pleasure—PE make noise funky and politics a party. (Owen)

Chickasaw Mudd Puppies *White Dirt* (Texas Hotel/PolyGram) Yeeee-haw! Foot-stompin', whiskey-guzzlin', ass-kickin' rock'n'roll—cranked out high voltage hillbilly style. Would be an appropriate soundtrack for a 90s post-punk sequel to *Deliverance*. (Blackwell)

Lou Reed/John Cale *Songs For Drella* (Sire) The Who had their Tommy, who was deaf, dumb and blind, and now Reed and Cale have their Andy, whose senses are all quite sharp. Yet, although cloaked in fiction, this song-cycle is for real. A personal and provocative portrait of their early and late mentor. (Blackwell)

Pussy Galore *Historia de la Musica Rock* (Caroline) Recorded in two days, this grunge-fest still sounds like a bunch of 15-year-olds on Quaaludes trying to learn Stones riffs, but now the riffs are circa 1964. From the low-rent humor of the title (inspired by a Spanish K-Tel collection) to the high-class cover of Willie Dixon's "Little Red Rooster," a very unpolished gem. (Greer)

Jane's Addiction *Ritual de lo Habitual* (Warner Brothers) The Janes have built their own spiritual universe, and *Ritual* proves again that their cult is gonna grow. More powerful and lyrically rewarding than *Nothing Shocking*, LA's most inspired rockers have graduated from snippets to songs. Instant street punk pandemonium. (Kuipers)

Bad Brains *The Youth Are Getting Restless* (Caroline) If you haven't seen them live, this album, recorded at a 1987 show in Amsterdam, will give you a taste of what the most underrated punk band in the world can do. All the hits, in the rawest of forms from "Pay to Cum" to "Right Brigade." (Spencer)

SEXUAL HEALING

After years as one of America's best known porno stars, Annie Sprinkle branched out into performance art. Now she's the High Priestess of what some call "New Age sex" or what she calls "post-porn."

If sex isn't sexy anymore, blame it on Geraldo. Blame it on the horny rock star of your choice. Or more accurately, blame it on America's obsession with what former porno-star-turned-performance-artist Annie Sprinkle calls "a matter of diet."

"Sex is like food," says the one-time "Queen of Kink." "There's junk sex, health sex and gourmet sex. We're a junk sex society. It's fast, raunchy, unhealthy and genital."

focused."

So if the choice between the greasy, grisly cannibal meat of hard-core porn, and the insipid, prepackaged Spam of soft-core porn, makes you nauseous, it's worth lining up for a generous helping of Annie's bountiful repast.

Annie, a veteran of more than 125 blue movie screen roles, says "Sex is my hobby, politics, spiritual discipline, source of income, favorite subject and the key to my great health and happiness." She has been dubbed "the Shirley MacLaine of porn" for her spiritual philosophy of sexuality and her positive attitude towards her own and other people's bodies.

All of this began when a 17-year-old named Ellen lost her virginity and her shyness, reinventing herself as Annie Sprinkle—hooker, stripper, porno star, eager participant in most any form of fantasy or fetish and, of course, artist.



There are only three things she's never tried: "I've never fucked a horse, I never did it with a dead person and I never ate shit."

Sprinkle's most memorable X-rated adventures have always been charismatic, personal vehicles for her idiosyncratic manner and agenda of self-expression. The ingenuous partnership of New Age wisdom, earthy wit and wild abandon is evident in each medium within the limited genre of "adult" material. Be it her full-length feature films (like "Deep Inside Annie Sprinkle"), her booklets (for example, her ABC Book of Lust and Sexual Deviation or *The Sprinkle Report*, an annual "newsletter devoted to piss-art"), her recordings (like her cassette tape/magazine *Sound Suck*), or her sporadic video projects (most notably "Rites of Passion," a classic of home video erotica, there exists an impossible and inscrutable combination of the metaphysical with the earthly—the slightly ironic with the absolutely sincere—that is unmistakably all her own.

Earlier this year Annie was the subject of controversy when Orange County, California, Congressman Dana R. Rohrabacher attacked the one-woman show that Sprinkle performed at the Kitchen, New York's most renowned showcase for avant-garde performance art. "They wouldn't pay me a cent for this type of show on 42nd Street," says Annie "so the idea that it was a porno show is ridiculous."



Photo: Ann McCauley

—Carlo McCormack

Photo: Ann McCauley



Marlboro

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100's</

The Archive of Contemporary Music, an invaluable resource that documents the history of American pop music, might be bought by a Dutch company. The American music industry doesn't appear unduly alarmed.

POP HISTORY



Tucked away in Manhattan's financial district is one of America's richest treasure troves—the Chambers Street headquarters of the Archive of Contemporary Music, a nonprofit collection of 385,000 records, a wealth of books, magazines, videos, films, photographs, press kits, clippings and memorabilia relating to popular music.

The rest of the archive is spread out over nine locations, including a Mount Kisco, New York, garage supplied by board member Nile Rodgers. Ironically, when Rodgers needed a copy of Chic's huge 1978 hit single "Le Freak," it was the Archive that had it—not his record company.

"Unfortunately, record

companies don't think records are important," explains the Archive's founder/director Bob George, who can't understand the music industry's lack of financial support for an organization whose sole purpose is preserving its creative output.

"It's been estimated that it takes \$300,000—in production costs and 'inducements'—to get a record into the Top 40. We need that much to remain a good research center, but we only get \$100,000 a year now, and it's a struggle."

Despite the indifference of the music industry, George dreams of one day developing a "national discography," where every record released is systematized via a number

system akin to the Library of Congress, then catalogued at Books in Print.

"Nobody keeps track of how many records come out in America each year," says George from his cubbyhole of an office where *The Jetsons*—First Family on the Moon, *Oops!* There Goes a Smile—Songs and Stones by Jim and Tammy and Their Friends and Jimmy Nelson—Instant Ventriloquism are within easy reach. "We figure 4,000 from the majors, and probably an equal number from the indies, though that's hard to say because there are so many one-off labels—rap, Latin, Caribbean and special interest."

"Every time a steel mill closes in the United States there's a record about it. Whenever a high school team wins a game, an indie produces a local record. There was even a *Ballad of Len Bias*."

If all this sounds like a lot of meaningless junk, George is quick to point out the value. "You can't understand an era just by understanding its stars—the biggest sellers aren't necessarily the most important musicians, historically. There's always a reevaluation of talent in each era."

Artists like blues legend Robert Johnson tend to "resurface" over time, notes George. Likewise, a Tina Turner can be rediscovered as a mainstream superstar long after her seminal R&B recordings have been forgotten.

"I don't think we can leave the history of music to the music industry," he contends further. "There doesn't seem to be much interest at record companies in making sure what they do is preserved."

Maybe not in this country, that is. George reports interest from Holland in acquiring the Archive, and he has no problem in taking it there. "It's an amazing country, where the history of American music is preserved and nurtured as it is throughout Europe, where American blues, R&B, jazz, classical and experimental artists have always gone to perform and make a living when they couldn't in America. Besides, Holland is already the home of sex and drugs. Why not rock'n'roll?"

—Jim Bessman



Courtesy of ForeFront

RAPPERS with BEATITUDE

Is Christian rap a contradiction in terms or a valid new direction in hip hop? The witch doctor of Bethlehem in the house.

When the rib-bruising rhythm of "No Stoppin'" pauses for a second, and 23-year-old rapper Chris Cooper proclaims, "We're gettin' hype for Christ, you see," you know that a new day in hip hop has dawned. Step off Satan—Christian rap is here and it's strong.

Cooper's Southern California posse, SFC (Soldiers for Christ) are one of at least 10 Christian rap acts signed to Christian record labels, getting airplay on Christian rock radio stations and performing live in Christian outreach concerts. There's also PID (Preachers in Disguise), ETW (Endless Time Warriors), DC Talk, JC & the Boyz, Transformation Crusade, King's Crew, D-Boy, True MC and Michael Peace.

"Christian rap is probably where Christian metal was in its early stages," says Rob Michaels, spokesman for Nashville-based ForeFront Communications, which last year launched the first record label devoted exclusively to Christian rap, YO! ForeFront. "With Christian metal, people were reticent to say, 'Yeah, this is something that's going to last.' But the still flourishing Christian metal scene has yielded a platinum-album band, Stryper, and 'Christian rap has the same potential,' says Michaels.

The Dallas-based duo PID, whose rapping style owes a lot to Run-DMC, are making the biggest dent in the Christian market. Their second album, *Back to Back*, is the first rap LP to reach Billboard's Top Inspirational Albums chart, alongside the records of Amy Grant and Sandi Patti. But like most Christian rappers, PID wants a shot at the huge mainstream audience. "Ain't no way I'm going to be sitting up writing jams for people who are already saved," says PID's Barry Hogan, 20.

Lyrically, some Christian rappers are on the Biblical tip ("Moses said, 'Pharaoh, ye! My God is God. I tried to do this easy, yet you're making it hard,'" raps ETW in "Too Busy Dissin'"). But mainly, Christian rappers see themselves offering an alternative to the sensuality and materialism of mainstream hip hop. And that very mission, according to one of the earliest Christian rappers, Michael Peace, may keep Christian rap from ever breaking out big.

"If there's any group that will end up making a mark," says Peace, "it will probably be PID or SFC," because of their street-hard style. (Peace, a youth minister from Rochester, New York, has released three rap albums, the latest produced by former Prince sideman Dez Dickerson.) "But once people understand where these brothers are coming from," he says, "they won't be popular. 'Wait, you're telling me to keep my zipper closed?!"

—David Mills



MARCH TO A DIFFERENT MARGARITA.

CUERVO GOLD MAKES IT

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Returning to blues-influenced basics, bands like London Quireboys, Company of Wolves and the Black Crowes are putting the roll back into heavy rock.



The Real Thing

Heard about the trendy Next Big Thing? It's good time rock'n'roll. Just like Rod Stewart and the Faces in their heyday. The key word for the coming wave is simplicity. Three chords, no waiting, heavy on the blues. No spandex, overdubs or guitar

heroes allowed.

"I hate everything on the radio—those Starship-type production things," says Kyf Brewer, vocalist for Company of Wolves. "It's like the back-to-earth movement in the 60s. Nobody wanted food with preservatives in it any more. We don't want preservatives in rock'n'roll either."

The first indication something cool was happening was that record companies weren't interested in it. "We couldn't get signed," says guitarist Guy Bailey of the London Quireboys, whose debut album entered the British charts at #2. "A&R men said, 'You sound like the Stones or the Faces; we can't sell this. It isn't fashionable.'"

"They wanted the British Guns N' Roses," adds bassist

Nigel Mogg. "Like, 'Where's your guitar solos?' Or, 'We've got to work on your image. Wear brighter clothes. Pink plastic trousers with zips up the bottom.'"

Now, of course, back-to-basics rockers are getting signed by the dozen. Most of them regard the values of the

You don't have to practice four hours a day either. "I learned to play off Chuck Berry's 20 Greatest Party Hits and 'Get Yer Ya Ya's Out' by the Stones," laughs Guy Bailey. "Learned a few songs and said, fuck it, let's get [a band] together."



commercial hard rock/metal scene they're entering with contempt. "People in LA are really desperate to be famous," says the Quireboys' singer Spike. "It's sad."

"There's nothing I wear on stage I wouldn't wear to the grocery store," says Chris Robinson of the Atlanta-based Black Crowes. "A lot of bands think, 'I have to be somebody.' No you don't. You have to be you."

"You don't have to practice four hours a day either. "I learned to play off Chuck Berry's 20 Greatest Party Hits and 'Get Yer Ya Ya's Out' by the Stones," laughs Guy Bailey. "Learned a few songs and said, fuck it, let's get [a band] together."

"You can overdo technique," Chris Robinson agrees. "I'm sure someone who's schooled would say Muddy Waters has no technique. But come on. That guitar that hits you right in the chest makes you do the shimmy-she-wibble..."

"Our idols are old blues players," says Black Crowes bassist Johnny Colt. Another growing trend, it seems. Recent Geffen-signing Salty Dog cover Willie Dixon's "Spoonful." Guitars Michael Hannon says, "We listen to the teachers of the teachers," rather than take their blues lead from Led Zeppelin or Aerosmith. Little Caesar, who combine Circus of Power-ish biker metal with 60s soul influences, crank out a surprisingly effective cover of Aretha Franklin's "Chain of Fools." The Black Crowes include Otis Redding's "Hard to Handle" on their Def American debut LP.

"I just saw John Lee Hooker in Atlanta," Robinson says. "He's 73, comes out in a badass suit, the coolest hat I've ever seen, drinkin' a beer, sits down, plays for an hour and a half. Incredible. I had chills."

—Daina Darzin

NATURAL HIGH



Say it loud, they're nappy and proud. Hair goes Afrocentric.

In these heady days of Afrocentricity, kinky and nappy hair is no longer a disgrace to the race. It's roots, it's Vernon Reid, it's positively cultural.

It's Saturday morning at Knapps, the haircutting salon in Brooklyn, and everyone is getting their kinky and nappy zapped into the freshest, latest, coolest style—Ethiopian Crown, Zaire, Phoenix, Pyramid, Expo, Moon Shadow, Hype, Fadeaway. Fuck the process, this is where natural black hair meets the razor. Not since punk has hairstyle made such a strong statement—that you belong to an exclusive club.

On one side of the room, a haircutter is twisting Microlocks at the crown of a buppie's head, giving him a skullcap of rhythmic, lightly rolled hair joints. Across the room, another hairdresser is shaving a Phoenix into the back of a homeboy's head. Get a job, Batman, here comes Egyptian myth, African tribal markings and geometric symbols—the new inspirations for the latest haircuts.

Owner Bill Lester, a fashion designer, opened the salon five years ago when he could find people to curl, to perm, to tease—but not to cut stylishly natural African hair. "My friends said, 'Kinky and nappy? Brother, you are having a nervous breakdown. But I was committed to change the way African people service their hair. We started coming up with African-type designs. Then someone showed us the same designs that we were doing in an African art book—pictures from Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal. We were doing what was inherited. Afrocentric is not something you have to think about. It just flows."

Jpstairs, a kid whose lightning bolt design is so fresh it burns, is browsing through the Primitive boutique, which features Lester's Adeloma clothing line and other fashion designers who might mix Jean Paul Gaultier and Kinti cloth. Says Lester, "There's nothing more boring than being predictable."

—Jill Pearlman

**"I knew I'd found the right woman.
Her face showed I'd also found the right diamond!"**

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TALKING ALL THAT

Jazz

The Dish, The Dirt, The Inside Dope
Sussed by DANNY FIELDS

The month of which I write began inauspiciously when I was caught in a crowd-control effort that turned into a police riot in front of the Ritz waiting to get into the SPIN Fifth Anniversary Party—obviously one of the most desirable events going on in the greater metro area that night. I heard it was fabulous.... Saturday night, and the Rock Against Fur benefit concert at the Palladium, preceded by a VIP cocktail party in the Mike Todd Room where so many happy memories were forged during those two weeks while the club was hot. The party featured a tasty vegetarian spread, lots of nuts and many wonderful music industry types working and/or hanging out. I chatted with Lene Lovich, who wondered, "Until we learn to deal with other creatures, how can we possibly learn how to deal with ourselves?" and explained that giving up fur was no problem, since she never wore any, although the banning of leather was "quite a big deal" for her. Richard Butler of the *Psychedelic Furs* urged people to make their own ethical decisions. He himself has always been against fur, though he still eats chickens and wears leather shoes. Ian McCullough was a walking faux pas in a long leather coat, but admitted that he's as ignorant of the movement as "the person outside." Well, he'd been hanging out with the Sugarcubes, and Einar had said, "We're going to a party Bring some candy." Phranc testified that "being an all-American Jewish lesbian folksinger, I'm a life lover," but emphasized that the celebratory aspect of the cause was very important in getting the message across. "You don't want to hit people over the head with this," she warned. "My shoes are leather, but basically I'm a denim gal. There's too much to do all at once. For starters, I don't wear fur, and I don't wear products tested on animals." Ric Ocasek, with Paulina on his arm, said that he hoped that 40 or 50 years from now, fur will have ceased to be a status symbol. Summing it up—our rock'n'roll gods and goddesses are not fanatics on the subject, animal rights is not Nicaragua and progress is more important than perfection....

Artistes of Suzanne Vega's stature do not as a rule sing at parties in their honor (one is generally grateful if they even appear), which made her intimate acoustic "showcase" at the Village Vanguard, perhaps the most famous jazz club in the world, so special, so dripping with "in-ness," that people were pinching themselves just to be there. It was a teensy bit disappointing to see the MTV camera crews at work, and realize that Suzanne perhaps wasn't singing just for us 100 hippest and most powerful people in the music business, but for her millions of fans out there in franchise cableland as well. Afterwards, she met and greeted every single guest. In the past, we've always talked about the D'Agostino supermarket we both go to, but she's moved and doesn't shop there anymore. It's not easy to make idle chat with the formidable Ms. V now that olives and loaves are no longer common ground....

From a cellar on Seventh Avenue to a penthouse on Central Park South—ah, where this work takes one! It was an "international" press conference for Robert Plant, at the Nirvana Restaurant, an Indian eatery in a building otherwise populated entirely by dentists. It was chosen because the name of Plant's new album is "Manic Nirvana," but the room has a history of old-guard British rock'n'roll associations—with its hanging schemata, sitar music, decent food and spectacular view of New York, it's been a fave hangout of the Brits ever since George Harrison's Ravi Shankar era. Now, "international" press conferences are extremely predictable, and not much fun—

At a recent press lunch to celebrate the release of their new album Survival, renowned fashion figures Tony! Toni! Toni! are joined by SPIN's legend of graffiti, Boaz "Methodone" Malose, no mean stylist himself.

Courtesy of PolyGram

questions from correspondents with thick accents run the gamut from "Will your tour go to Brazil?" to the always challenging "What do you think of your fans in Japan?" Plant, however, is so brilliant an ironist that he could, as they said of Sarah Bernhardt, read the alphabet and make it sound interesting. No need to this time though—a domestic sharpshooter named Thom Duffy from *Billboard* infiltrated this gathering, and wasted no time in socking The Question to Plant—"Robert, there are many reports of promoters holding dates, setting up stadiums. . ." "Oh, here we go!" said Plant. "It didn't take long, did it?" "What about the persistent rumors," continued Duffy, "that you're working with Jimmy and going out as Led Zeppelin?" "I didn't know they were persistent," said the singer, with a tinge of irritation, and then changed the subject to his own solo album, referring in passing to the rumored Zep concerts as "fictitious gatherings," and the rumors as "the same old crap, something to fill newspapers when there's nothing else to write about. I can tell you though, the Eagles will re-form." After another 15 minutes, loud Indian music filled the air, and a bellydancer swirled up the aisle. She jangled and spun and shimmied up to Plant's table, and while everyone's eyes were on her, the star disappeared. No kidding, he was just gone. What a showman.





Tape Rape

The man selling the prerecorded tapes on the street will tell you they come straight from the factory, and the reason for the low price—as little as \$4 a hit album—is the lack of the "middlemen."

He's right, to a degree. What he won't tell you is that the "factory" is illegally producing counterfeit cassettes for which no one but the criminal-minded get paid. And what you the consumer don't realize, until you get home and play the cassette, is that you've bought a nonreturnable, second-rate product.

Be it pirate T-shirts outside a concert, bootleg albums of live shows or the current scam—non-existent greatest hits CDs manufactured abroad and sold as "imports"—counterfeit merchandise is nothing new in the lucrative world of entertainment. But the sale of counterfeit cassettes, usually on the street, from decaying storefronts or in flea markets, has become ever more pervasive in recent years as the tape format has come to dominate music sales.

New York's premier dance and hip hop indies such as Tommy Boy, Profile, Select, Sleeping Bag, Warlock and Next Plateau are particularly hard hit by counterfeit tapes. Fred Munao, president of Select/

Active Records, estimates that close to half the counterfeit products rip off these independent labels, and he doesn't take it lightly. "There's a personal loss of pride when you see something that you manufacture and own being sold by someone else. You get angry."

Munao estimates that his company is losing five percent of its sales, while Gary Pini of Profile Records, who has seen tapes of his label's own product hawked right outside their lower Broadway office, reckons his bigger releases are losing as many as 100,000 legitimate purchases.

Figures released by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) would seem to confirm this. In 1989, close to 1 million counterfeit cassettes were seized, along with a staggering 20 million labels. But confiscation at the point of sale is futile.

"These guys are like roaches—you step on them and there's another one there," says Tommy Boy Records president Tom Silverman of the vendors. "You've got to stop them at the source." The RIAA hopes to do this by lobbying for stricter laws. In California, where 50 percent of all last year's seizures of counterfeit tapes took place, such a law has already resulted in jail sentences. Similar laws have been passed in seven other states, with New York likely to follow suit.

Artists Against Counterfeit Tapes, a coalition of leading figures from hard-hitting independent labels, will go public later this summer in an attempt to convince the public to shun inferior products.

Though Tom Silverman's argument that by buying the products, "You're taking the money out of the artist's pocket," might not deter bargain hunters, the risk of bad quality might. "They're using a cassette as their master, as opposed to

a CD," says Steven D'Onofrio of the RIAA's Anti-Piracy Unit. "So already they're one generation down as far as sound quality. Their quality control is basically to make sure the graphics look okay so they can pass it off, and that there's some

How to tell if a tape is counterfeit or not. Badly copied graphics, no information on the flip side of cover, but sometimes surprisingly good sound reproduction.

sound on there."

To check this claim, SPIN recently went to New York's 14th Street and bought a pirate tape of Salt-N-Pepa's new album *Black Magic*. The counterfeit cover was a color Xerox of the original, faithfully duplicated right down to the RIAA's toll-free Anti-Piracy Hotline. The printing on the cassette shell itself was noticeably worse. The sound quality of the counterfeit, however, was only marginally below that of the original.

Conscientious customers should assume that any contemporary tape on sale for \$4—less than the wholesale price—is a counterfeit. The RIAA will thankfully accept information on possible sources of counterfeiting and has an Informants Fund for those who lead them to major manufacturers. In the meantime, the problem rages on.

—Tony Fletcher

Freedom of Speech

An album dedicated to fighting the censors has been censored itself.



*Bob Guccione, Jr. as featured on anti-censorship album *Soundbites from the Counterculture*.*

Soundbites from the Counterculture may be one of the first spoken-word albums to hit the pop charts. It's a compilation of editorials, speeches and writings, all concerned with current First Amendment and censorship issues, read aloud by their writers: Hunter S. Thompson thrashes the Bush administration; Jello Biafra discusses his obscenity trial; the late Abbie Hoffman reminds us to "just say no" to all injustice, and SPIN's own Bob Guccione, Jr., criticizes the media's treatment of AIDS.

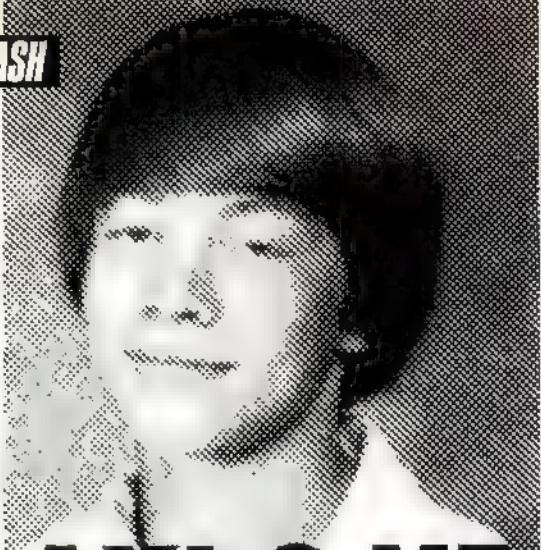
Soundbites also features clips by 60s guru Timothy Leary, writers Jim Carroll and Danny Sugarman, Henry Rollins (formerly of the hardcore band Black Flag), and Senator Eugene McCarthy. Producers David Swinson and Bill Stankey came up with the idea when they realized the danger to First Amendment rights inherent in the censorship and record labeling mandates which groups like the PMRC are currently succeeding in enacting.

The front cover of the album presents the Statue of Liberty gagged and surrounded by barbed wire. The back cover reproduces one of the labels which has been proposed for use in state-level record labeling, with the endorsement: "The artists on this album oppose censorship in any form."

It's ironic then that the original cover—as done by controversial LA poster artist Robbie Canan—was rejected by the legal department of Atlantic Records. Canan had recycled a photo of one of his pieces which appeared on a New York wall in 1986. Titled "Men with No Lips," Canan describes it as an "unwanted" poster of Ronald Reagan, Donald Regan, Casper Weinberger and James Baker III, which was covered with graffiti by passersby. Stankey is quick to point out that he is satisfied with the final cover, as it effectively conveys the sentiment of the album.

A video with original music will be produced, and a movie project is in the works, entitled "Road Prophets," which will showcase some of the performers from the album like Thompson, who will, ironically, play a policeman. Stankey describes the plot as something like "Easy Rider" meets the 1990s."

—Susan Nanes



AXL & ME

Axl Rose wasn't always the glamorous hell-raiser we know today.

I went to high school in Lafayette, Indiana, with Axl Rose and Izzy Stradlin. I didn't know either of them, but my girlfriend knew Axl. I was in the Boy Scouts

with Izzy's younger brother, and his older brother used to beat me up. I don't know if Izzy pissed in the sink back then or not. Axl (real name Bill Bailey) transferred to a country school our junior year, and then dropped out.

My dad delivers mail to Axl's grandmother, and they both marvel that fans somehow send her things to give to Axl. My brother does a pretty good imitation of Axl's effeminate mince, which earned him the nickname "Axl Best." Once I

visited "Axl Rose's Star Shop," a Lafayette rock'n'roll clothing store akin to those found on Melrose Avenue or St. Marks Place. However, there was only one rack of clothes.

Axl recently paid a visit to Club Dreamerz, Chicago's answer to New York's CBGB. The word traveled upstairs to the concert room that the mainstream metal star had deigned to visit Chicago's last true punk bar, which caused amusement and derisive comments. The bands finished playing, and Axl and his retinue stormed upstairs. His bodyguard and followers formed a flying wedge that made a perfunctory sweep of the room, examining the wall-to-wall graffiti and looking at no one.

They led out, "Bill Bailey, Bill Bailey," Axl didn't blink, but his bodyguard tapped him on the shoulder. "He knows your name, man." I tried again. "Bill Bailey! I went to high school with you!" Again, his bodyguard tried to stop him: "He says he went to high school with you, man." Axl didn't respond. I could have approached him later in the evening, but I realized I really didn't have anything to say to him anyway.

—David Best

Driving Mr. Jackson

Who is James Shento? Michael Jackson would've never made it to the White House without him.



When SPIN heard President Bush was honoring Michael Jackson as "Entertainer of the Decade," we thought it was time to learn more about the elusive legend.

But all the White House promised us was a rose garden—along with a three-minute "No Q&A" press conference. So while Michael toured, I got an exclusive interview with the driving force behind his Washington trip—Pittsburgh Limousine's James Shento.

Though he says little in public, Michael opens up when the car door closes. "He's talkative," says James. "He jokes and everything. If he sees someone dressed funny on the street, he'll laugh. He's normal folk. He might be weird at home, but that's his business. All that matters is how he presents himself to his fans, and he's really impressive in that respect. It's amazing how nice he is."

A wave of excitement breaks across the lawn. Michael has emerged with Dan Quayle on a balcony across the street. As they disappear, James receives word to position the limos. Soon he's driving Michael away. Michael cracks his window.

"Any words for SPIN readers?" I shout.

"I love you all," whispers Michael.

Not satisfied, I head for the lavish estate of Alan Kay, where the Capital Children's Museum is also honoring Michael. While fortunate guests enjoy champagne and caviar in the Kay dwelling, the press settles for Coke and ham sandwiches in the private gymnasium. I stroll outside—and once again run into James Shento.

"Michael went to the Smithsonian after the White House," says James, munching his ham sandwich. "It was like a rock concert with the screaming. I hauled ass to open the car doors, but he stayed inside."

While James has been around the block with others—Andy Williams, Elton John, Heart, Sophie Loren, Jerry Lewis—he holds a special place in his car for Michael. "I've always been a fan. When I first drove him it was a dream."

Back in the gym, the "Entertainer of the Decade" makes his brief appearance and heads for safety.

"Goodnight, Michael," I say as he passes.

Michael smiles. "Goodnight."

And the limos roll on.

—Mark Blackwell

Reality Check

To some, virtual reality is psychedelic television for the 21st century. To its inventor, it's a socially responsible tool.



Imagine putting on eyephones, earphones and a special body suit that senses the direction of your motion. You open your eyes—and you're a cartoon. All around you is a bright, sharply defined world like you see on your Mac. But this is 3-D—and when you move your hand, the angular hand in front of you moves.

Welcome to virtual reality—a place where you can grab objects and fly, pick up musical instruments that "play" mountains and where the major limitation is your own imagination.

Designed by Jaron Lanier's VPL Research in North Carolina, this computer fantasyland actually has many practical applications. It's already being used by architects who can take their clients through buildings before construction. Medical applications are being designed that will allow surgeons to experiment with a patient's "virtual body" before opening the real thing. It could also be used to give a paralyzed person the experience of walking. "We found that people adapt quickly to different body shapes and manipulate extra limbs well," says Lanier, suggesting that VR could help people relearn lost motor skills.

A 29-year-old Californian with shoulder-length red dreadlocks, Lanier sees in virtual reality a dazzling array of possibilities. He refuses to take money from the Defense Department and is against extending

VR research inward towards sci-fi author William Gibson's vision of brain implants and direct-feed of internal sensory impressions from the neurons. He feels that animal research necessary to develop the latter would be unethical, and that it would involve a dangerous loss of user control.

"With VR now, you can just take off the clothing," he says. The next step in VR, after perfecting the visual images, is to add tactile stimulation, so that when you pick up an object, you can feel it as well as see its movement. This is far from developed, but people are already talking about "dildonics," which is virtual sex.

But Lanier doesn't see VR replacing the real thing, nor does he see it as addictive. Virtual reality is tiring, because it needs the user's energy to create and inform its world. "The most amazing moment is when you leave it," he says. "The physical world looks really good. You become very sensitive to the subtlety of reality."

—Maia Szalavitz



For people who
like to smoke...



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SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.

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PEPSI COOL CANS

In the summertime we reinvent and reclothe ourselves with bright colors, light fabrics and lots of skin. This year, Pepsi joins the warm weather rebirth with "Cool Cans," four new pop-art designs available in a limited edition of 1.2 billion cans (or 200 million six-packs). Cool Cans are the harbinger of a future where brand names are celebrities and graphic designers appear on talk shows.



HYPertext

An underground collective of authors using Apple Macintoshes to create the fiction of the future. Dispensing with the traditional linear narrative of the novel, interactive hypertext enables the reader of any given "page" to choose from many other "pages" within the network. Some hypertexts are just narrative, while others incorporate everything from TV schedules to tarot cards to album liner notes. With a major Apple distribution deal in the works, the future should arrive some time this calendar year.

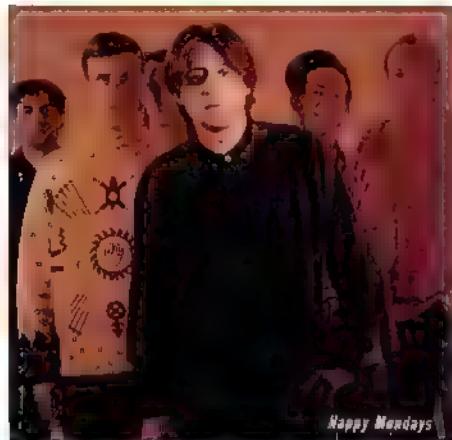


MR. PEPPERMINT

You work all night at a 7-11, breakfast on warm Colt 45 in front of morning TV and freak yourself by imagining that Bozo was your dad. Hey, wasn't Mr. Greenjeans' kid a rock star? The Butthole Surfers' Gibby Haynes is the son of Mr. Peppermint, Channel 8 pal to millions of Dallas tots. Look for Mr. Peppermint's 60s-era record now released on Blast First! Records.

MANCHESTER

When the renowned T-shirt bearing the legend "...AND ON THE SIXTH DAY GOD CREATED MANchester" turned up in New York, it confirmed that the English Civil War has been won by the North. (Or, as The Fall's Mark E. Smith predicted, "the North Will Rise Again.") Happy Mondays, 808 State, Inspiral Carpets, A Guy Called Gerald and the boom in flared trousers are among the latest delirious tremors from the town whose punk and post-punk explosions shook the world. It has become a post-industrial production line for pop icons—Morrissey was the last one, and the Stone Roses' Ian Brown is the latest. Expect mass hysteria when his band hits these shores later this year.



Happy Mondays



BELLY BUTTON PIERCING

Now that bare midriffs are being exposed everywhere, you'll notice some daring folks are fleshing more than just white stomachs. Belly button piercing is fast becoming the accessory of choice for those people who want an option to a tattoo and have run out of room on their earlobes. You may have to look hard for someone to do the deed—and kids, don't try this at home.

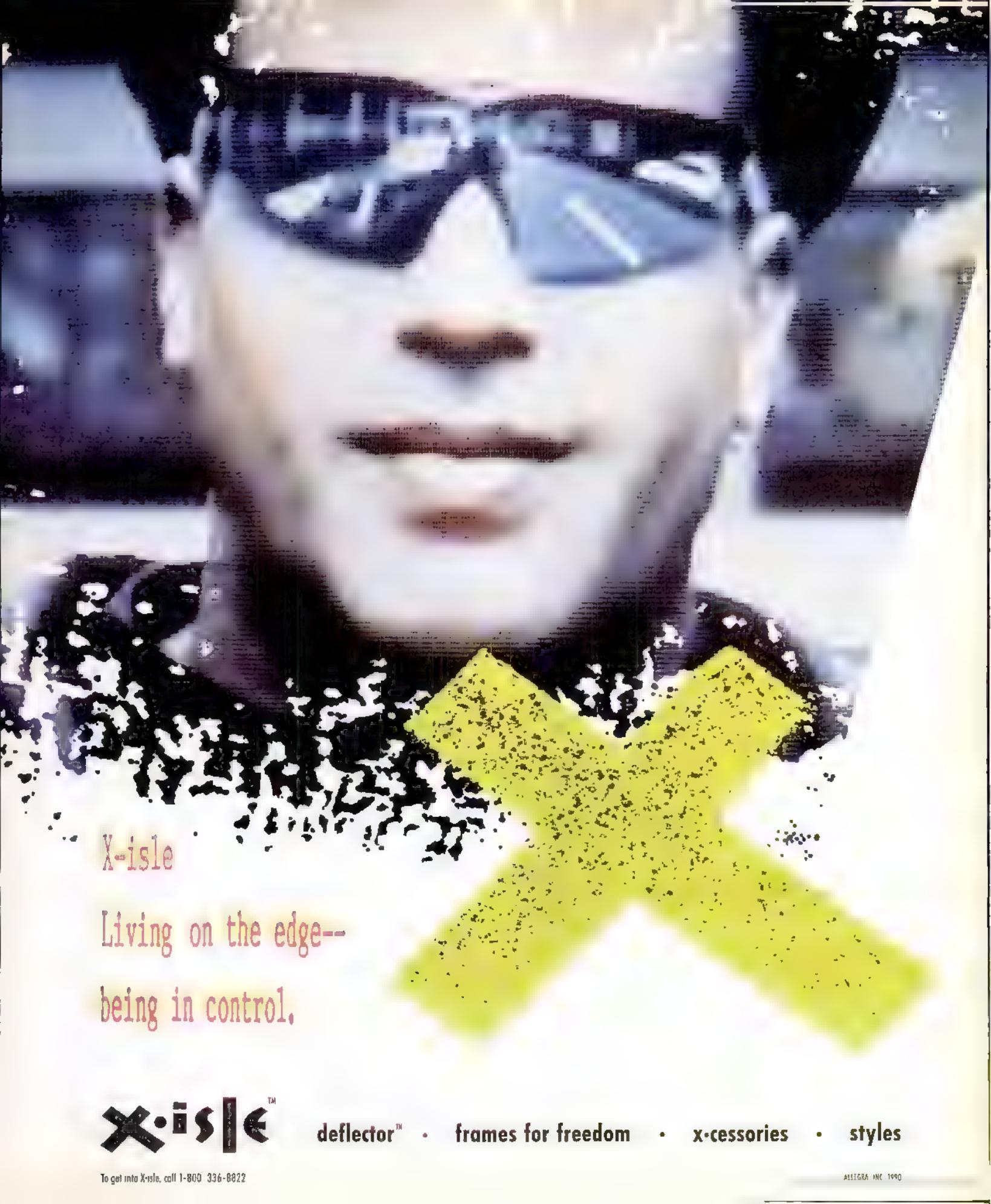
MADONNA BY GAULTIER

Red alert. America's latest designer defense system was recently unveiled in Tokyo by none other than Madonna, the major-mistress of fashion. The double-barrel Jean Paul Gaultier torpedoes make the 1940s model "bullet bra" obsolete. The new missile design has now landed on American soil courtesy of the pop star's heavily hyped *Blond Ambition* tour. Madonna is God.



Compiled by:
Nancy Leopardi,
Lauren Spencer,
Gavin Edwards,
Mark Blackwell,
Frank Owen,
Dean Kuipers
and Steven Daly.

Billy Bong/London Features International



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Who are the New Age Soul Children? Who are the strange bedfellows doing what as the boundaries between rock and dance music blur?

And the walls come tumbling down, not only in the world of ideology, but also in pop music. Black and white, dance and rock, body music and head music—what were once fiercely patrolled aesthetic borders are being overrun by a free exchange of ideas.

The greybeards' gripe about the passing of the 60s sense of community and the "machine-made dance-pop piffle" (copyright Kurt Loder, MTV) that's polluting the airwaves sounds particularly ironic today—those machines and that dance music are the reason that pop culture is, once more, a family affair. (It's no accident that Sly and the Family Stone's late 60s opus *There's a Riot Going On* is so influential among New Age Soul Children.)

Can SPIN be more specific? Most of the artists here have some kind of political/cultural agenda, a broad humanism and (even if pharmaceutically induced) a common positivity and open-mindedness. The word "soul" is revived—minus the baggage of 60s nostalgia—among new watchwords like Unity, Consciousness, Culture.

Whether or not all this adds up to just a "Don't Worry Be Happy" for the 90s remains to be seen...

It's probably in its favor that this trend, this zeitgeist if you will, is so amorphous, so variegated as to defy categorization—a chart is the best illustration. Some unlikely candidates stumbled on to our agenda: U2, for instance, are included because of the Chinese cover of "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" (produced by Soul II Soul); it's also worth noting that WBL's legendary Frankie Crocker regularly airs "Angel of Harlem" alongside hip hop, reggae and gospel. Sinéad O'Connor makes it despite "I Am Stretched On Your Grave," a lamentable lament juxtaposing nasal folk keening over a hip hop breakbeat. Such desperate eclecticism is the same as the multicultural literacy of, say, Soul II Soul or even Beats International, whose guileless marriage of The Clash and the S.O.S. Band hit pay dirt.

Someone like Terence Trent D'Arby, on the other hand, looks as multicultural as all get-out, but he doesn't make the cut—an 80s Guy if ever there was one. (It normally takes a few years before the previous decade's name becomes a prima facie insult.) On paper Malcolm McLaren seems like another candidate, with his longtime involvement with black urban culture, but records made on paper can be buried with all the other faux values of the decade when greed was good.

Forget manifesto pop, forget ideas rock, forget music where text is more important than texture—if it doesn't cut it out on the dance floor it simply doesn't cut it. Generally, art-rockers and irony-mongers pretending to be dance/hip hop are looking mighty tired, while dance acts on the arty tip is an idea whose time has come—ask De La Soul, Digital Underground and Lil Louis and the World.

A mutation of this new aesthetic has taken a strong hold in Britain, where a revolution/evolution beyond punk's wildest dreams has effectively deregulated the Top 40. Post-acid culture and its blurring of dance/rock delineations have produced a new breed of acts like the Stone Roses, Happy Mondays, the Beloved, etc., who have suddenly, permanently, put the likes of Morrissey and the Mary Chain out to pasture.

The new multiculturalism shouldn't be confused with the efforts of well-meaning frequent flyers like Sting, Gabriel and Byrne to bring us the latest underheard Senegalese genius. It turns out that the REAL world beat is Afro-American rhythms processed by an Akai sampler in the hands of a bunch of ecstasy-addled soccer fans from the North of England.

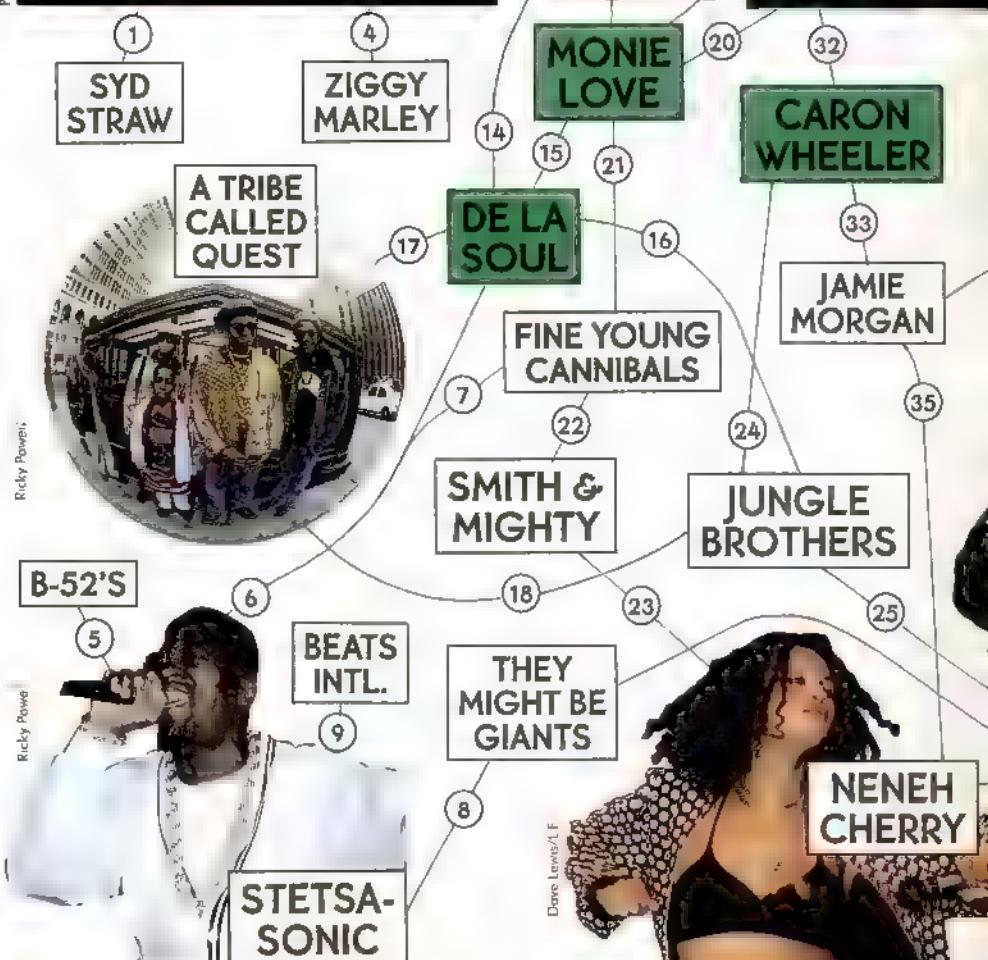
If you doubt that America will be greatly affected by all this, remember that five years ago R.E.M. were marginalized college rockers and that black music was verboten on MTV.

—Steven Daly

CONSCIOUS



Paul Cox/Redferns



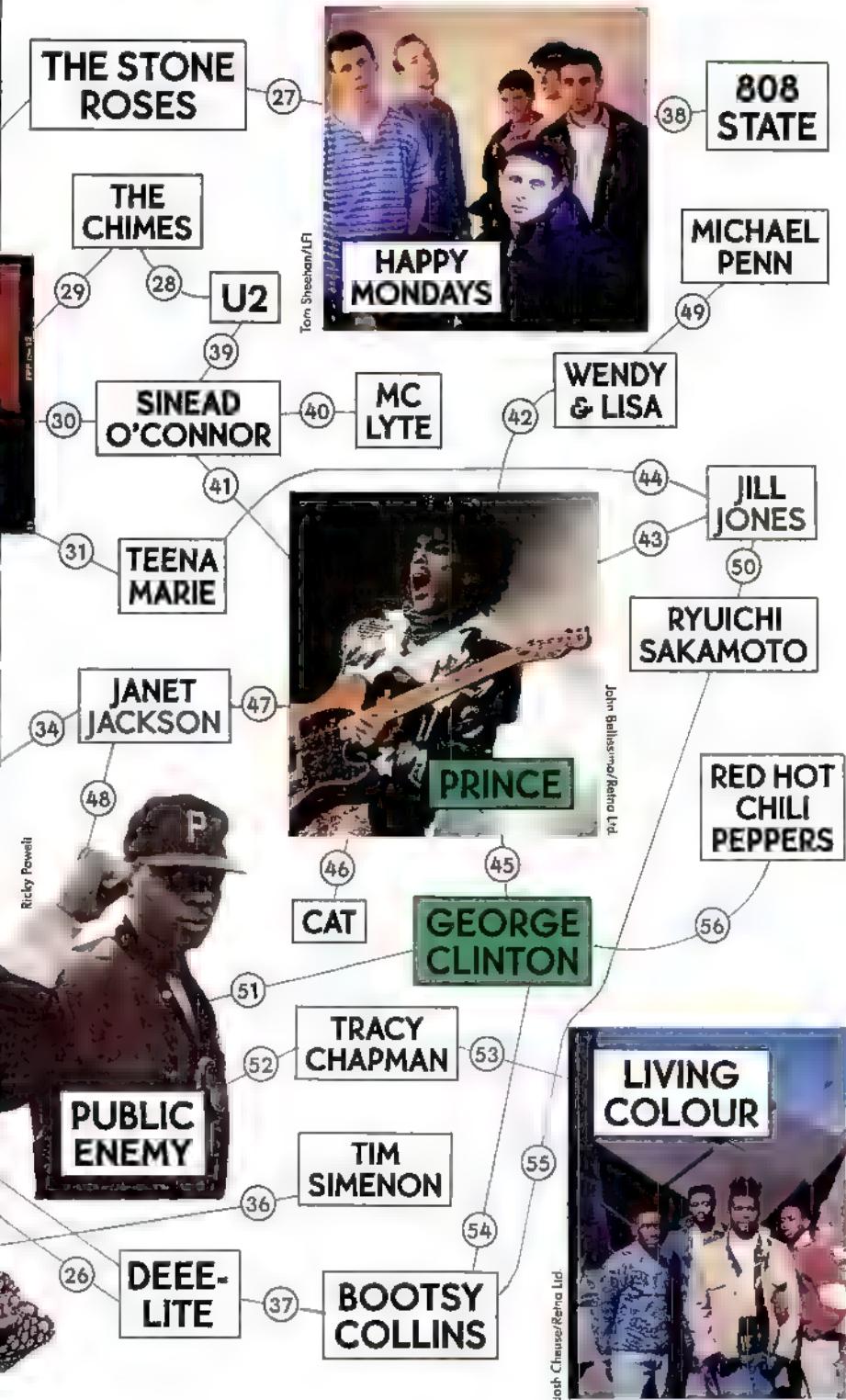
Ricky Powell

Dave Lewis/LF

Kevin Cummins/LF

drawn by

PARTY



1 REM's Michael Stipe cowrote/duetted on "Future 40's (String of Pearls)" with Syd Straw on her Surprise album.

album, by Soul II Soul.
30. Neilee Hooper of Soul II Soul coproduced Sinead O'Connor's "Nothing Compares 2 U."
31. Soul II Soul are producing tracks for Teena Marie's next album.

32, 33, 34. Caron Wheeler was the featured vocalist on Soul II Soul's *Keep On Movin'*; she guests on Jamie J. Morgan's debut album.

34. Morgan's album is on Tabu, the home of Janet Jackson's producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis.

35. Morgan was half of Morgan McVey, with Neneh Cherry's main squeeze Cameron McVey. Neneh's "Buffalo Stance" first saw the light of day as the B-side of that duo's "I'mokin' Good Diving."

Looking Good Diving.
 36. Producer of "Buffalo Stance" was Tim "Bomb The Bass" Simenon.
 37. Bootsy Collins will guest on Deee-Lite's debut album.
 38. Happy Mondays and 808 State toured together in early 1990.

39. Sinéad O'Connor collaborated with U2's The Edge on the song "Heroin," from the soundtrack of the film "Captive."

40. MC Lyte guested on Sinéad's single, "I Want Your (Hands on Me)." 41. Prince wrote "Nothing Compares 2 U."

- 42. Wendy and Lisa are former members of Prince's Revolution.
- 43. Jill Jones is on Prince's Paisley Park label; he cowrote and produced tracks on her debut LP.
- 44. Jill Jones used to sing back-up vocals for Teena Marie.

45. George Clinton is signed to Paisley Park.

46. Prince's former dancer Cat is now signed to Paisley Park.

47. Prince and Jan and Lewis—*they go back like rockin' chairs.*
48. Jim and Lewis produced *janet Jackson's Rhythm Nation 1812*, a conscious attempt to get on the

conscious attempt to get on the conscious tip. The title track was remixed by Public Enemy's producers the Bomb Squad, though the version on the album is a

the version was never released.
49. Wendy and Lisa guested on Michael Penn's March 25, 1991 show.

50. Jill Jones guests on Ryuichi Sakamoto's Heaven.
 51. Public Enemy guest on George

51. Public Enemy guest on George Clinton's *Paisley Park* debut.
 52. Public Enemy's "Fight the Power" will still be the most popular

"Power" was the theme song to Spike Lee's "Do The Right Thing"; Lee directed the video for Tracy

Chapman's "Born To Fight" 53. Living Colour recently recorded a version of Tracy Chapman's "Talking 'Bout a

54. George Clinton and Bootsy Collins were fellow members of Parliament/Funkadelic

55. Collins guests on Ryuichi Sakamoto's Heaven.
56. George Clinton produced the Red Hot Chili Peppers' *One Hot Minute*.

Red Hot Chili Peppers' Freaky Styley.

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When John Cougar Mellencamp, Willie Nelson and others gathered on the Hoosier Dome stage, the question was what can we do for America's heartlanders?

Farming IV Aid

Article by Mike Redmond

The American family farmer and the environment were supposed to be the issues when Farm Aid IV took place on April 7 at the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis, but the real drama came when Elton John dedicated "Candle in the Wind" to Ryan White, the 18-year-old Indiana boy who died the next morning from complications due to AIDS.

Throughout the 13-hour-plus event, more than 70 musicians and speakers took the stage. One of the more impassioned personalities was Jesse Jackson, who delivered statistics on the plight of America's black farmer, but in looking around the audience it became clear that his vision of a Rainbow Coalition in the heartland was not well-represented. Farm Aid IV was embarrassingly void of performers and spectators of color. Besides the fact that Guns N' Roses kicked most of the other bands around the block with their rocking rendition of UK Subs' "Down on the Farm" and a new tune called "Civil War," Slash was one of the few black musicians of the day.

John Cougar Mellencamp, who

organized the show with Neil Young and Willie Nelson, wasn't at all satisfied with the event, despite audience turnout and support. He shot barbs at the government and the news media for saying the problems that made Farm Aid I, II and III necessary no longer existed.

The question remains, then, whether Farm Aid IV achieved its goals—to raise money for its assistance programs, to raise the consciousness of American consumers and to convince government to change the system that some farmers believe requires them to use unsafe levels of agricultural chemicals to ensure high crop yields.

"Farm Aid has not affected the government to the fullest extent," Mellencamp said. "The media has screwed up coverage by pretending that the farm crisis doesn't exist, but consumers still don't know about matters

like farm pesticides. People in Los Angeles think they're biting apples with nothing on them, but there's shit all over them."

"It would be nice if there wasn't a need for Farm Aid," added Jackson Brown. "But we have to fight to make this government responsive to our needs."

Though donations for Farm Aid IV are still rolling in, the money raised in past years has enabled over 600 farm families across the nation to use the funds for everything from emergency needs (food and medical) to legal fees, and over \$9 million have gone to farm organizations, hotlines, churches and service agencies. The criteria for obtaining funds varies, but families need only contact the Farm Aid organization to get details on how to apply.

According to spokeswoman Carolyn Mugar, this year's event raised about \$1 million in ticket sales, another \$1 million in donations and between \$400,000 and \$500,000 in souvenir sales, and was

enough to call the day profitable, with more money expected from 900-number donations and ad sales. But even more importantly, she stressed, Farm Aid IV broke through to a new audience mainly because "there is a strong interest in environmental issues now. In the last five years people have started to realize that saving the family farm will have an effect on everyone's life."

Richard Young, of the Kentucky Headhunters, added, "Farm Aid is the only damn thing that happens where you bring rural people and city people together."

Although the organization is hard-pressed to predict when the next Farm Aid benefit will be staged, the reasons for the shows should be remembered year-round. As Mugar said, "As long as the farm crisis is here we will continue to have Farm Aid benefits. We will always be here to provide a louder voice and a bigger stage."

For more information on Farm Aid, call 1-800-FARMAID.





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Butch Bellor

Everything's Gone Black

New Order's Peter Hook has a new, darker-sounding band called Revenge. But he doesn't mean it. Or maybe he does—he likes to keep his options open.

Peter Hook wants you to know he's just a regular guy. He's got tattoos on his arm and worries about his teeth, just like anybody else. He calls himself a beer-swilling slob. He swears that New Order, and before them Joy Division, have been misunderstood as aloof, humorless doom-rockers. They were really just shy.

Which is bullshit, of course. Even if it were more or less true, it's still bullshit. And Hook knows it. New Order created and maintained their image far too carefully for it to have been simply the result of a "lack of confidence in what we were doing," as he puts it. Beginning with Joy Division, they cloaked their music in a thick fog of ambiguity, in part by

Article by Jim Greer

their refusal to play by the established rules of record promotion—no band photos on the album sleeve, few interviews, oblique song titles. Enough to give your average record exec a well-deserved nightmare or two, for New Order, though, it worked, at least in the long run.

But not without taking a toll. Though the release of a "best of" compilation, *Substance*, in 1987 brought the band a wider audience that had grown wider still by the release of last year's *Technique*, the never-ending cycle of touring and recording exhausted them. In addition, the pressures of their newfound success had strained relations among the band.

"No one's going to say, 'Oh, this song uses a drum machine, so it sucks!'"

members. Late last year, New Order decided to take a break.

In the hiatus between New Order projects—and there's a ways the possibility the band will call it quits entirely—bassist extraordinaire Hook has got himself a new band. It's called Revenge, which is a name he doesn't much enjoy explaining, except to say that it doesn't mean what you think it means. At least, it probably doesn't mean what you think it means. Hook likes to keep his options open.

Revenge consists of Hook, Dave Hicks on guitar and Chris "CJ" Jones on keyboards. Peter handles the lead vocal chores, but the music is, he insists, a collaborative effort. Stylistically, the band's Capitol debut, *One True Passion*, doesn't differ all that much from, say, "Temptation"-era New Order, though Hook likes to describe it as somewhat darker than most of his other band's work. The more radical departure for Revenge, perhaps, is the sense of humor displayed in the song titles—"Fag Hag," "Surf Nazis," "Kiss The Chrome"—which, though as irrelevant to the songs' content as any New Order title, could never appear on an album by that band.

In person, Peter Hook is everything he claims to be: affable, unpretentious, open. He seems an ideal drinking companion.

SPIN: Why start a new band? Why not just take some time off?

Hook: It's a funny old world, isn't it? It stems from the fact that New Order have decided to work in a different way from now on, which is a mutual thing we all agreed on. We decided not to put as much emphasis on the live thing as we had been. The new emphasis is on recording rather than playing. And while I agreed with that for New Order, I couldn't really handle losing such a big part of the thing that I enjoy.

So how do you see this project? Is it just to mark time until New Order get back together?

I don't see Revenge as anything, really. I started off doing something because being confronted with a large amount of time off, after we'd been so busy for so long, was a bit daunting, and I thought, what am I

Continued on page 91





Article by Bönz Malone

Home of Tone Lōc and Young MC, **Delicious Vinyl** is LA's answer to New York's Def Jam.

From the pages of MC Comics comes the dynamic duo: White Mike & Matt Dike. Delicious Vinyl detectives in search of the finest beats & rhymes they can find. Will they succeed or will they abort their mission to spin for the tin man and his metal band? We now join our feature already in progress .

Back at the Hilton, I go through my files on Delicious Vinyl. It seems that both deejayed in NY before exploding in LA. Agent No. 1: Mike Ross, 27, grew up in Long Beach, California, attended NYU and worked as an A&R man for the rhythm section of MCA Records. Agent No. 2: Matt Dike, 28, from upstate New York, a procrastinator & lazy to boot, but has the qualifications to throw a rough jam. One-time assistant to Jean-Michel Basquiat. Yeah, well, I'm not impressed

Putting back the file, I call my West Coast correspondent—Detective Nettles—and arrange a summit. This was the first time East Coast's "Justice League" met the West Coast's "Avengers." Since we're all heroes we should at least start acting like colleagues. Many forums have been held in NY on the quality of LA rappers and it's always been the same verdict. They ain't @&%\$*!

Cruisin' Sunset Boulevard, I'm thinking of what to expect. The place was small & hard like hell to find, located as it was behind a Thai restaurant. Everything was in disarray but in an organized way & I was wondering if this was really the record company that had gone near double platinum with Young MC's debut album, and near triple platinum with Tone Lōc's *Lōc-ed After Dark*

Then as if right outta hell came the dopest rock groove ever to pump out of a pair of Bose speakers. Thirty seconds into the song I knew I wasn't sent,

PLANET JANET ROCK

rather I was led, to the tune of Masters of Reality's "The Candy Song" Rick Rubin (cofounder of Def Jam Recordings) had put them on his new branch: id Def America but nobody paid any attention. Now Matt and Mike have them on Delicious.

But I'm dockin' 'em, like, "What's your game, man? You're supposed to be a hip hop label?" Immediately the doubts from the jet came back—LA artists are a bunch of sell-outs & are more into pop n' rock than breaks & stuff. I didn't have any real reason to hate LA hip hop, just the same attitude that got me in the "house gang" when I spent time in the joint.

Company dropped in & Nettles & I left on tour to meet the rock of the squad—Tony Smith—otherwise known as Tone Lōc, King of the "Wild Thing." We got to his residence & couldn't find a parking space because the driveway was jammed with at least six cars & two bikes. It reminded me of back home on the avenue where it's \$1,200 a week and a Cherokee Jeep. There was a Montero, Kawasaki & 560 SEL Silver Mercedes with a black rag on top. Kinda fly'n'all but I wanted to see the artist, not the art.

The Locust was cool playing Nintendo & smoking a spiff the width of a Blimpie & the length of a bat. I've never met anyone who plays video games with shades on or owns a pair of Nike slippers. I thought it was my diplomatic immunity that got me into this mansion—nope, Lōc will let you in, but there's no written guarantee that you'll be leavin', especially with his black pit bull named Zulu who eats cats. I could have sworn I saw the dog take a pull of weed. Loc's attitude was that both the West Coast Avengers (LA rappers) & the Justice League (East Coast rappers) should cease the bullshit, since we're all in the same gang.

My guard started to come down after a while, yet it still didn't click. What is a cool bro like Tone—so cool he took his mom to the Grammys instead of his girl—doin' hangin' out with Matt n' Mike? At this point I didn't know what to think. I was so high I thought there was a fire in the house. We decided to get some air as well as something to eat, so I slapped the dog five and left.

Later that night I was lounging at the Hilton thinking, "Maybe these guys ain't that bad after all." Naw, they can't fool me. What the hell do they know about the old school—the days of Bambaataa'n'Flash, Bronx River or Clark Kent—the first DJ to mix using a telephone receiver as a headphone? Naw, their rep may be known out here in the Planet Jane, but back home there's no fame left for newcomers.

Thursday morning I awoke to an oatmeal sandwich and some Jack Daniels (Breakfast of Champions). Once again the day will be occupied with interviews and observations. My main concern is the inquisition of Matt & Mike, but to finger them I gotta go through the frontline to get to the top brass. Today is a double hitter—Body and Soul, Delicious Vinyl's answer to Salt-N-Pepa, & Def Jef, an old school veteran on the conscious tip.

These two girls, Dzire & Almighty T accompany Nettles & I for some Mexican food. Their style is uptown/old school, the kind you play for a fee. Dzire is from NY originally & Almighty T is from Chicago and the two acts are working with the JBs (Jungle Brothers) on the production of Body and Soul's upcoming album. Not just a pretty face.

The stereotype of hype that has it that rap belongs to the Boys club doesn't bother 'em & it's not supposed to. Rose (Almighty T) spoke on the fact that they didn't receive any crowd participation at the New Music Seminar last year. But on the opposite spectrum, they stripped the floors of the NY club the Underground &

What I wanted was to find some info that would prove my theory that Delicious were exploiting their artists and weren't really down with the hip hop scene, so I became more of a private eye than a journalist.

had enough assurance from the crowd

What I wanted now was to find some info that would prove my theory that Delicious were exploiting their artists and weren't really down with the hip hop scene, so I became more of a private eye than a journalist. Dee said that Def Jef was their producer & helped get them the gig, so I made arrangements to rap with him for a while. He was from the Bronx, my hometown, and we'd met before at 3rd Bass' NY record release party. We drove around Santa Monica with a 40 oz. and talked about everything from the start of the label to the ole days when we used to jam in the park at 164th street Grand Concourse.

"I used to cut school everyday," Jef says. "I bought, borrowed or stole records, 'Apache,' 'Catch a Groove,' 'Funk' Drummer, all the fly beats I remember. I paid \$15 for 'I Can't Stop.' It was me & Eric Von, my DJ. He had \$48,000's Technic's (first turntables) and the girls, but we couldn't have the 40 oz. in the crib 'cuz mom's, you know. I made rhymes daily & I'd bring the mic & we'd get busy. I was backspinning kinda slow but Von was fast."

While he was reflecting, so was I, about my first jam in the project. The Lōc Squad (a local crew) played the sound set that night. It was 1980, kinda the same time Jeff started Joe pack for Calif. They played Bily Joel's "Stilettos" (one of my very favorite records) and I stayed out until 1:30 AM. When I got home I got the piss beat outta me, but it was the best damn jam I've ever been to. When I told Jeff we both cracked up. Wait a minute! By law we're not suppose to be getting along

Alright, this has gone far enough. It's time to get to the source. After getting dropped off at the hotel, I grabbed my dick'n'an extra clip & set out for Club Sandwich (Delicious Vinyl), I'm not gonna take it easy I'm just gonna pull out the Bic'n'clip & let 'em have it along

Spin: You're not really into hip hop because you like rock and shit.

Mike: The way hip hop is going—the influences, the mixing, the samples, etc.—there are no boundaries now. If it's done in the right way you can bridge the gaps. Hip hop and rock definitely intersect.

Matt: We just follow our senses. Rock, soul, R&B, whatever—we just put out what we feel is good.

Spin: I remember the days of the Zulu nation, Grand Master Flash, Kool Herc, The Cold Crush Brothers &

the World Famous Supreme Team. Listenin' to homemade Bronx River tapes & convention records from 81. You're just the new jacks who couldn't get down back then, so you jumped on the bandwagon at the last minute. Ya'll don't know anything about rap's origin. Nobody in LA does.

Mike: That's not true. We had a club called the Rhythm Lounge in the beginning of the 1980s & the old school used to house the floor. Before breakin' was out they were exploding out here. This is where the roots come from. Our Def Jef is totally coming from old school. But there are new guys that want to do new shit. You try to stay in tune with the past, but it's not always important to strictly abide by old rules. Some people want to pay homage to the past, and others don't. I understand it, but I don't feel that strongly about it either way. We just make music that we like.

Some West Coast hip hop is bad. But so is some New York hip hop, MC Hammer's new single ("I Can't Touch This") is a joke—to play "Super Freak" over and over again is ridiculous—but the new Digital Underground and Ice Cube albums are really cool and they're West Coast. I'm tired of the East vs. West thing. It might have pertained to the scene a couple of years ago, but it has been played out. Rap is national now. Our music never had a real LA sound, because our attitudes about music weren't derived from mindless old school rap. We just happen to be on the West Coast.

Matt: We just wanted to make funny records to sell. We started on a 4-track, then 8, 12 & 16. We're still using 16. It was just a joke. We looked at Def Jam as a model from what Rick Rubin did. We went into rap 'cause we didn't have any money and rap was cheaper.

Spin: What? You got the idea from what Rubin did? What about what Russell Simmons is doing now? Ya'll aren't Afrocentric. What do you know about black music?

Mike: At first I might have been a little apprehensive about being white in this industry. It has been said that there are always white guys behind black music. If we know what we're doing the artist understands it. We just do business the fair way.

Matt and I met through a record pool and we were both very aware of what was going on with black music. We were into soul, R&B and hip hop. When we started the label Rick Rubin was always in the back of our minds, because he proved it could be done. He did it better than anyone else.

After seeing Rick, I went out and got a four track & drum machine. Technology wasn't the factor. It's all about the feel of the record. Production is important but it shouldn't be a fanatical thing. They used four tracks in the 60s and made great music, yet all this new technological shit doesn't have any soul—it's like homogenized pop.

White Mike talking about soul? It wasn't until that final confrontation that I realized their mission was the same as mine & that we really had no beef at all. It was just pride that taught me to be loyal. That's the attitude in New York—nobody wants to give Body and Soul, Def Jef, Tone Lōc, Young MC their due—but Matt & Mike deserve respect. The independent I used to call Club Sandwich is really small heroes. Besides, I kinda like the taste of plastic pizza! Let's go home...

Love,
Bonz Malone



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Repulsed by the 60s and inspired by the Ford Presidency—they are the Young Republicans.

Article by David Samuels

Photography by Craig Daniels

DON'T DRINK, DON'T SMOKE

David Robb is quite obviously a zealot, a crypto-fascist drug warrior from Yale University who headed up Volunteers for New Haven, lived on the street to experience what it is like to be homeless and just five minutes ago was mouthing all kinds of sensitive-sounding phrases about the responsibility of government to help those who are least able to help themselves. "It's hard to imagine a more destructive legacy of the 1960s," David opines, "than the rampant drug use we have today. Working in the projects in New Haven, I came to the conclusion that the culture and economy of drug use and addiction are doing more to destroy the lives of the poor in America than poverty by itself ever could."

I think that David Robb is wrong, and that the War on Drugs hurts the poor more than it helps them. But David Robb has seen the problem first hand, spent hundreds of hours in the housing projects of New Haven and all I know is that Jefferson Morley's last article in *The Nation* disagreed with his conclusions. At worst, David Robb is a principled and intelligent young man suffering from a certain failure of imagination.

Right or wrong, young Republicans see the 60s as both cause and symbol of a profound decay in social and moral order. The social engineers of big government imposed sweeping and unrealistic solutions to social ills that made those ills more intractable than before. The divorce rate skyrocketed, schools stopped teaching. A tidal wave of relativism broke over American social life, leaving behind a heap of broken picket fences and empty high school libraries, a Hurricane Hugo of the American psyche. Now someone has got to go out with a hammer and some nails, put up some fences and get the kids away from that damn MTV and back in the library where they belong. And the young Republicans are ready and willing to go out and get the job done.

"As the communist countries move towards capitalism, the capitalist countries will move more towards socialism. . . ." "The people in our society who have the most legitimate need of government intervention often are the same people whom government does not reach. . . ." "Our top two priorities for the new decade are clear: education and the environment." Far from unusual sentiments to overhear in Washington, while cooling your heels at one of the endless after-hours receptions for yet another think tank or political action committee that claims to have discovered the elusive and magical key that will finally unlock the door of the White House for a Democratic nominee for the Presidency of the United States. Think tanks are the waiting rooms of American political life, antiseptic places full of used office furniture and old magazines where the future Undersecretaries

of Defense and Agriculture straighten their ties and run up tabs on the WATS line until called to the service of their country.

Only I'm not at a reception for the Democratic Policy Committee or the Fund for a Democratic Majority or any of the dozens of groups with three-letter initials, track lighting, and an aging collection of Senior Fellows with personally autographed pictures of Lyndon Baines Johnson hanging above their institutional-is-

The prophet of this new generation is not Ronald Reagan but an old 60s holdover, Tom Wolfe. *Bonfire of the Vanities* is a hipster's vote of confidence in their social and moral program.

The 60s are the most schizophrenic decade in the American pop consciousness. Movies and television depict a mythical feel-good time of love, flowers and groovy buckskin vests when young people were free to flout the rules, smoke the dean's cigars and ingest illegal drugs in quantities so vast as to bring a crooked smile to the face of even the most hardened road tripping follower of the Grateful Dead. Documentaries and history classes focus on the great crusade for civil liberties, a time when every man-buck put his shoulder to the wheel, scrubbed his face and headed south to Mississippi or west to Chicago to enforce the provisions of the Voting Rights Act or protest the war in Vietnam.

So where do people like David Robb get off tossing around phrases like "the collapse of any higher guiding moral principles" or "a decade that holds a special horror"? David Robb is 23 years old. The 60s were something his parents watched on TV. What does David Robb know about "destructive moral relativism" and "lack of moral clarity"? Maybe Bill Bennett makes David say these things. After all, Bill Bennett is David's boss, the man for whom he puts in long hours drafting press releases and copy-editing speeches.

Bill Bennett mouthpiece David Robb: "Drug use and addiction are doing more to destroy the lives of the poor than poverty."

sue oak veneer desks. The apostles of convergence, the Earth Day fans and the bleeding hearts in pinstriped navy suits I'm listening to are all under 30 and comfortably ensconced in the Old Executive Office Building, a hop, skip and a jump from the Oval Office. The generation of Americans who went door to door handing out leaflets for Ronald Reagan has moved into positions of power under George Bush. The corridors of the Old Executive Office Building are filled to bursting with the very generation the Democratic think tanks and policy committees hope to capture with talk of a streamlined Navy and a cut in Social Security taxes.

With the exception of the Carter hiatus, which lasted long enough for them to associate the Democratic Party with hostages in Iran, an oil crisis and double-digit inflation, an entire generation has come to political maturity under Republican Presidents. The last time one party dominated national politics so completely was the 20-year Democratic reign of FDR and Harry Truman. Fifteen years after Harry Truman left office, the young veterans of the New Deal returned to Washington and gave the country the Great Society and the Vietnam War. If history is a fair guide, the young White House spokesmen and Assistant Directors of Political Affairs with whom I spoke will return to Washington some time after the turn of the century and make some history of their own.



What unites the young Republicans and differentiates them from their Democratic counterparts is a ferocious desire to make and enforce rules. The young Republicans talk about "making tough choices" and "setting standards" with all the seriousness of high school football players in the huddle, preceding a fourth down goal-line stand. References to "the moral fiber of this nation," "the absolute beauty of the system set up by our founding Fathers" and "the McDonald's mentality" are prevalent in America today" are tossed about with an ease and enthusiasm that would inspire high school civics teachers across the nation to positively leap for joy.

"Individuals must be held accountable for their actions," says Betsy Hart, leaning forward and wagging her finger at the ceiling. "The fact is, life isn't going to be the same for everybody." Betsy Hart is 26 and is employed by the Heritage Foundation, where she runs a program for young conservatives called The Third Generation. One of the salient differences between Democrats and Republicans is the names they assign to their youth organizations. Democrats tend to choose names like "Youth for Democracy" that sound like part of the Peace Corps program or a now-defunct socialist summer camp in the Adirondacks. Republicans choose names like The Third Generation, which summon up images of, say, an advanced robotics laboratory at MIT or The Boys From Brazil.

Why Betsy Hart and her friends are so eager to set standards and make rules has something to do with Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan and a lot to do with their parents. Jimmy Carter is the first President this generation remembers well. And what they remember isn't too cool. "Under Jimmy Carter the country was kicked around," says Tony Zaugotta, president of the College Republicans. "Ronald Reagan restored hope for the future." Sean Walsh, a White House Spokesman at the age of 27 with movie star looks and Senatorial ambitions, agrees. "Impotence, lack of respect and double-digit inflation" are what he associates with Jimmy Carter. Ronald Reagan, he says, "restored a sense of personal responsibility, of pride in our country."

A founding editor of the notorious *Dartmouth Review*, Dinesh D'Souza did graduate work at Princeton and later worked for Ronald Reagan. Now a Research Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, D'Souza is currently putting the finishing touches on a book on conservatism and liberalism in academia—*Alan and God at Yale* with footnotes. As one of the founding members of the young conservative reaction, D'Souza is well situated to analyze the genera-

Andy Foster, Office of Political Affairs, White House: "The real difference between the two parties is procedural, not ideological."



Daneesh D'Souza, founder, Dartmouth Review: "Parents haven't acted like parents, no one sets rules. The result was a rebellion against the lack of authority."

he says. "I'd like to start a company, I think that might be exciting. Being an elected official would be a great honor, but that would have to be a family decision."

Like his peers in the White House, Andy Foster is a sincere, hardworking bureaucrat—not an ideologue. "The real difference between the two parties," he says, "is procedural, not ideological. The Republican Party has what is for the times a more practical way of running government." I ask him if what he means is that the Republicans will bring us a better managed, more efficient welfare state, and he says that is exactly what he means. The young Republicans see themselves as practical idealists in the aftermath of a decade of materialism and greed, a decade, they are quick to remind you, that is as much the product of self-indulgent hippies turned yuppie stockbrokers as the often callous pronouncements of the Reagan Administration on social issues.

To the young Republicans Ronald Reagan is, as Republican Senatorial Aide Chris Baldwin calls him, "Grandpa Reagan," a genial man who launched a war of ideas but neglected the substance. George Bush, they say, is providing the substance and they have come to Washington to help him do it. "Most of my friends went to law school," says David Robb. "Why? To make money. I'm disappointed in that." After his time with Bill Bennett is up, Robb wants to teach history to high school students. Those who are truly on the right, like Betsy Hart, are not in the Administration. "What they want is big government, except with lots of vouchers and tax credits," she sniffs. "They were the college Republicans who were having their wine and cheese parties while we did the work."

The prophet of this new generation is not Ronald Reagan but an old 60s holdover, the man who has been talking about the abstract art swindle and limousine liberals longer than anyone else, Tom Wolfe. Everyone has read *Bonfire of the Vanities*. Words fail them as they search for the right superlative, "pure prophecy," "absolutely brilliant," "a modern morality play." *Bonfire of the Vanities* is the literary touchstone of the young Republicans, a hipster's vote of confidence in their social and moral program. "He says it better than I ever could," says one young Congressional aide, "I even have a talk he gave on videotape."

But what must Tom Wolfe think of his newfound following, the Student Body Presidents and the young women in their high-collared Ann Taylor faux Puritan dresses, the Tom Wolfe fans who received *Bonfire of the Vanities* as their Book of the Month Club Main Selection and liked it so much they went back and read all his other books? Every author wants people to read his books, and yet . . . and yet . . . I have an exceptionally clear and vivid picture of Tom Wolfe, dressed to the nines in his white suit. The white suit is Tom Wolfe's trademark, a touch of *fin de siecle* elegance, a sartorial nod to the idea of the writer-as-outside observer. Everyone knows about the suit: there's a photograph of Tom Wolfe wearing it in this month's issue of *Vanity Fair*. And now Tom Wolfe is standing at a reception at an upscale Washington book nook in his white suit, a plastic glass of ordinary Chablis in his hand, besieged by young Republican autograph hounds from Illinois with mid-level jobs in the Bush Administration, telling him how he really socked it to the bourgeoisie.

Craig Daniels

tional hunger for values and standards. "I sense a real sense of betrayal," he observes. "Parents haven't acted like parents, no one sets rules. The result was a rebellion against the lack of authority."

"It's always been up to the more refined levels of society to set standards," D'Souza concludes, "but in the 60s and 70s they lost touch with what the American people valued. People began to feel that their elites were conspiring against them." Talking to many young Republicans, one gets the sense that they feel betrayed, the sense that we are all the victims of a great swindle perpetrated by the purveyors of pop art and school busing. You guys had all the answers they say, eyes wide. So why are my parents and their friends all getting divorced, why did poverty get worse instead of better and why are three blue lines on a white canvas great art?

They've heard the explanations a thousand times, they know them all by heart—the tensions inherent in the interaction between line and space or the need to redress socially created inequalities through affirmative governmental intervention. The trouble is, it doesn't work. Maybe, they say, the answer is that the experts were wrong. Maybe it's time for someone to take a stand. Kim Gordon is 30 years old, relatively urbane, a former producer at ABC News and currently the Press Spokesman for Budget Director Richard Darman. "I look at Andy Warhol and I know it's not art," she confesses. "John Singer Sargent, a Sargent landscape, that's art. It just is." People say things like this all the time, and have said them for the last 30 years. The difference is that people used to say them at home or to their friends, to people they knew would understand. But Kim Gordon is sitting in her office talking to

me, a member of the press from New York City with a white shirt buttoned at the neck, and I'm recording every word she says.

What the young Republicans want is not a revolution, but a restoration. Contrary to the stereotype of the young scalpel-waving anti-statist conservative ideologue poised to disembowel the welfare state with a flick of the wrist, most of the young Republicans I talked to were perfectly comfortable with existing

The young Republicans see the 60s as both cause and symbol of a profound decay in social and moral order.

social programs. Every one of them had a list of programs that should be expanded—more money for education, stricter pollution controls, more money to fight drugs. "When you pull government out," says Robin Sprague, Executive Director of the Young Republicans, "the problems don't get any better and often they get worse."

Andy Foster, 25 and an Assistant Director for Political Affairs at the White House, agrees. Like many young Republicans he's uncomfortable with the image young conservatives established for themselves during the Reagan years, "Hitler Youth type stuff" he calls it. Andy Foster is painfully earnest, a mother-in-law's dream. Gerald Ford inspired him to get involved in politics. "I want to get married and have a family,"

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DEBORAH HARRY

"If I go out into the sun, I need a really strong sunblock because I have light skin, and I burn easily. I'm a very good swimmer, but I don't like to swim too far out. I make sure I keep the land in sight. I really love to sail. If I could take the summer off, I'd sail around the world with a bunch of people and we'd just laugh the whole time."

Cold bathing suit by Carolyne Roehm.
Hair and makeup: Colin Booker/Vertalli,
Photo by Bernard Belitz. Styling by Grayson Riley.



The Nearest Faraway Place



Summer is a big picture window without glass, the horizon is within your grasp and the beach the nearest faraway place to put your troubles behind you. The beach is the margin between land and sea, where sunbathers bathe and waves, racing to shore, steepen and curl, forming tubes surfers shoot through.

The nearest faraway place may not be a beach at all. It could be an amusement park or the parking lot of a mall, an open fire hydrant or a patch of sunlight on a windowsill. You could be on the 16th green, putting for birdie, or in a hayfield, lying on your back, while a fair-weather cloud rolls by like a big DO NOT DISTURB sign. The nearest faraway place is wherever you find peace of mind and no toxic waste of any kind.



DWEEZIL ZAPPA

"Our only family vacation was last year. We went to Ibiza, an island off the coast of Spain. We went there for some music festival. It was brutal. My little sister got about 16,000 bug bites and one side of her face swelled up about a foot. It was the first and probably only ever family vacation where all of us got on a plane and went somewhere together."

MOON ZAPPA

"Besides the colossal bug bite adventure, it was a beautiful place—if only the other people had gone somewhere else and taken the bugs with them. Everyone there wants to be Puck. They wear plants, they wear anything, they wear nothing. Oh, also, Dweezil got seasick, and I'm allergic to shelfish. I had a reaction to the paella."

Dweezil: Black velvet shawl collar jacket by Matsuda, black wool trousers by Matsuda, black cotton T-shirt by The Gap, sunglasses by Jean-Paul Gaultier/L.A. Eyeworks. Hair and makeup by Erica Roseman/Vinages.

Moon: Black tubular twist contoured long column by Giorgio di Sant'angelo, black hat by Fred Hanson, spider pin by Philip Cantrell/Fragments, Ring and earrings by Atelier/Fragments, Black gloves by La Crusia.

Photo by Christopher Kehoe. Styling by Arianne Phillips/Vinages.



CHRISTINA APPLEGATE

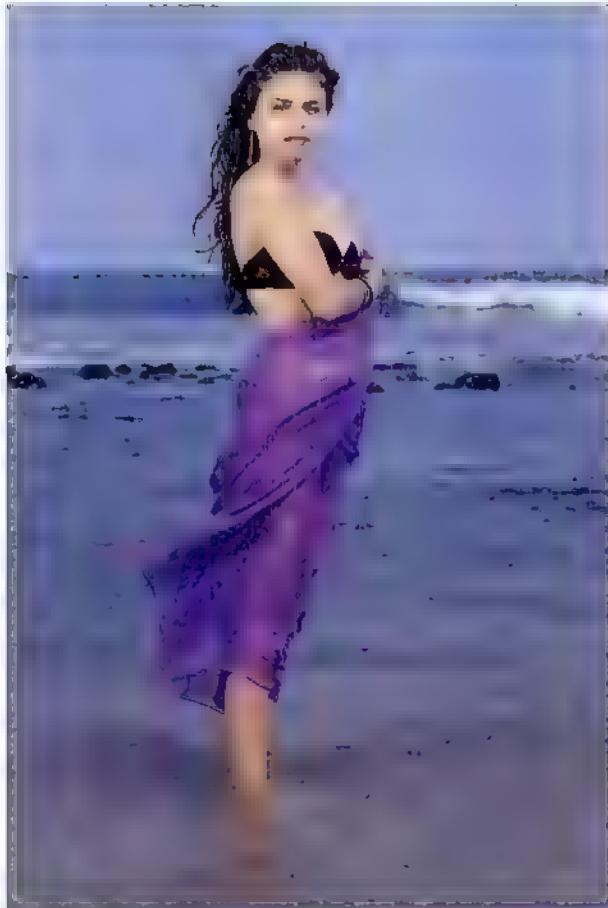
"After reading SPIN's last swimsuit issue, I've been paranoid of lying on the beach and having some crazed bass player on LSD sneaking up on me from behind and slapping me in the face with his flaccid member. It's almost as bad as being in the water for a really long time and getting 10 pounds of sand caught in the crotch of your bathing suit so it looks like you went in your pants."

Hand-beaded bustier and shark tail by Jodi Head Designs, NYC

rings and earrings by Fragments

Hair and makeup by Steven Reiley/HMS Booking

Photo by Christopher Kehoe. Styling by Arianne Phillips/Visages.



HOPE SANDAVAL (MAZZY STAR)

"I almost drowned at the beach when I was eight. It was the first time I ever went deeper than my ankles into the waves, and I didn't know how to swim. Two friends saved me. I thought of it as a near-death experience, but neither of them were worried. Maybe they didn't want to make me feel uptight. I can swim now, but not in the ocean. I'm still afraid of the waves, definitely not a surfer. I do like to go the beach and hang out, though."

Purple mousseline chiffon wrap by Giorgio di Sant'ANGELO, black bathing suit and jewelry—her own. Hair and makeup by Erica Rosenau/Visages.

Photo by Christopher Kehoe.

PHRANC

"The coolest looking bathing suits are the red and white and blue and white half-inch wide striped racing suits they wore at the Olympics in the 60s. All the kids on the AAU swim teams when I was growing up had them. God, those were cool. The worst suits are the bikinis that ride up the crack in the back. Ugh. I hate those. Your entire butt gets tan and I'm into tanning, but I'm not willing to go that far. I might go for an Esther Williams two-piece from the 40s. The only part of your middle that really shows is from above your belly button to just below your breasts. It's a sexy part of the body that's been forgotten about."

Red Lycra one-piece by Ocean for Oceanpool, sunglasses by The Eyewear Lab, watch by Seiko. Swim team: All suits are navy Lycra one-piece Ocean for Oceanpool, bathing cap courtesy of Santa Monica College, gold iridescent goggles by TYR. Hair and makeup by Erica Rosenau/Visages.

Photo by Christopher Kehoe. Styling by Arianne Phillips/Visages.



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Los Angeles KPWR FM 106
Miami WHOT FM 105
Minneapolis KOWB FM 101.3
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Rules and Regulations Each entry must be in a separate envelope received by SPIN's office by July 27, 1990. Machine or computer entries not accepted. Judging will be determined by the photo editor of SPIN, whose decision is final, on or about July 30, 1990. One photo per household. Prizes are not exchangeable or transferable. Void where prohibited by law. Open to U.S. residents only. All federal, state and local laws and regulations apply. Entries become the property of SPIN Magazine. Winners agree to the use of their names and likenesses for publicity purposes by sponsors. Winner of grand prize trip must be accompanied by adult or guardian if under the age of 18. Contest is not open to employees (or their immediate families) of Campaigns Publishing and sponsoring companies. For a list of winners, send a self-addressed, stamped 8½" x 11" envelope by December 1, 1990 to: "GO PUBLIC™ With DORITOS®" Winner's List, SPIN Magazine, 8 W. 18th Street, New York, NY 10011.

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KID (KID'N PLAY)

"Growing up in the city, we didn't get to the beach. Surfing was tough in the streets. We called it 'fire hydrant surfing.' Actually, that's not a thing. I don't surf. I did go to Venice Beach last summer, but people recognized me and it got kind of wild. With the movie and all, I have to avoid the beach at all costs."

T-Shirts by Nike, High-top sneakers by Airwalk, surfboards courtesy of Island Windsurfing, cotton point shorts by Tim Taylor.

Photo by Bernard Belair. Styling by Grayson Riley.





FUJICHROME-RDP

FUJI-RDP

Ride Rock

Winter's house party and the claustrophobia of clubland have migrated to the amusement park midway. Your loudest jams simply beg for motion. That's why they call it rock'n'roll. That's why the new Godzilla stereo in your 'ol Buick Elektra feels like the best thing since drive-ins. That's why you feel pent-up on a crowded dance floor. The amusement park has room for your whole crew, the brew, the chew and attitude, too. *And it moves.*

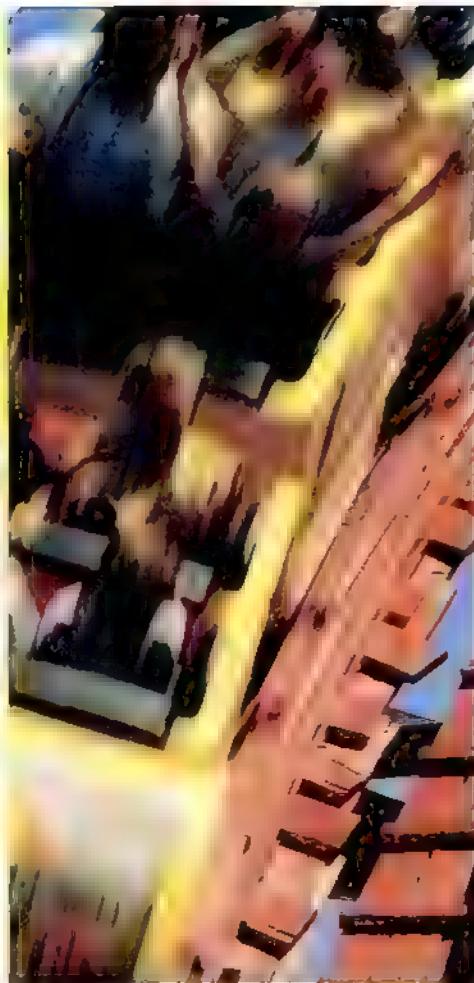
Amusement park rides at 100 decibels are better than sniffin' glue and crankin' the Ramones. Reality becomes a sonic blur and only music and motion matter. On the Octopus ride, you feel like you're in a blender with Motley Crue. On the Octopus-like "Break Dance", a DJ spins classic dance tunes from the 50s to the 90s. In the Gravitron, the blood spins to your head while the DJ blasts you with righteous 'ol Molly Hatchet and 60s psychedelia. In the Hell Hole you're doused with Liza Stanafield or Aerosmith while your butt sticks to the spinning wall like a sock in the dryer. The "Bomb the Bass" spectrum shift has turned Disco Bumper Cars into the soundtrack from *Clash of the Titans*. And on the Pirate they're rockin' to AC/DC's "Back in Black."

Out on New York's Coney Island, the Himalaya and its spin-off rides have become a new

dance DJ battleground. Saturday night on the Polar Express, two guys load the cars with a rush of sweatin', dancin' homeboys while the DJ teases and wreaks havoc from his booth. This is the first medium where the DJ controls the sound *and* the motion. As his concert sound system flogs your brain into a mushroom omelet with [tk]'s "Walk on By" dance mix, he jacks the machine into hyperspace. "Y'all wanna fly?!" [timid shouts] Are you fly enough to fly?!" [fun screams] Then bye bye!" [blood-curdling screams]. Then he slides into the new Salt 'N Pepa single.

Just beyond the do-it-yourself music video booth, The DJ on the original Himalaya is rockin' his riders with [tk song and artist] as they schuss over an alpine snowscape. Meanwhile, over in Astroland, a tropical version of the same Himalaya is snaking in circles to a drubbing Lambada dance track. Smiling ride rockers are fanned out to catch the sonic shock wave in front of each ride, jerkin' in time and doin' their best to impress. At two-fifty a pop, they're only gonna ride the best DJ and thus the War. Just like at the clubs, when the mix goes stale the faithless migrate. They move over to the machine that rides their rocks off.

—Dean Kuipers



NIKKI VAN LIEROP (who is JADE 4 U)

"First of all, a New Beat beach party would be fun. Second, there would be young people, wearing their black bikinis. . . . It's hard to say how it would be different from a traditional Beach Boys party because there's never any good weather in Belgium. You can take walks, but there's not really any swimming. In France though, or Australia. . . ."

Couture black bathing suit by Lisa Bruce, black gloves and antique feathered boas available at Family Jewels, New York City, drop white crystal earrings by sculptor Marla Snyder.

Hair and makeup: Adam Kindberg/Pipino-Buecheri
Photo by Bernard Belair. Styling by Grayson Riley.



TRACI LORDS

"My favorite bathing beauty is Betty Page. She was one of the first pin-up girls in the world. She had black hair, white skin, really red lips, cat's eye sunglasses and wore very pointy bras. It's always fun dressing up like her and pretending you're in a different era. It's like lying by the pool and pretending you're on a tropical island."

White Lycra two-piece by Esther Williams, earrings by Philip DeOca for Fragments. Hair by Gina Monaco/Visages. Makeup by Erica Rosenast/Visages. Photo by Christopher Kehoe. Styling by Arienne Phillips/Visages.

Holiday On Ice

Article by
Dean Kuipers



Keep cool for an endless summer. Turn yourself into a human ice sculpture and maybe future medicine will give you a second chance at life.



"We have a basic disagreement with contemporary medicine over the criteria for pronouncing death," says Carlos Mondragon, president of America's largest cryonics group, the Alcor Life Extension Foundation. "Death is not an all or nothing thing. It's a very long, drawn-out process before every bit of you is dead. Cells are still metabolizing long after you're buried—that's how you decompose."

As we stroll around Alcor's facility, across the street from a Corvette restoration shop in Riverside, California, Mondragon speaks as though he were shoving a rowboat away from a dock. He's defended this process a million times. Cryonic suspension—a technique whereby dead people are frozen hard as a brick until future medical technology can repair them—does not inspire confidence in too many people. I mean, they're already dead. On the other hand, Alcor's membership has jumped from 90 to more than 170 in the last two years, while 70 others are still working through the endless consent forms.

Cryonics is not controversial. It simply doesn't work. Yet. Unlike the movie "Ice Man," they cannot thaw you out and bring you back to life.

"If you take a superheing, a Bo Jackson, and freeze him by today's techniques and try to wake him up tomorrow, that guy's going to be in deep trouble," says Dr. Paul Segall, researcher at Trans Time Cryonics in San Francisco. "He's gonna be dead as a doornail. And everyone in cryonics knows that. Nobody will tell you any different."

But hundreds of people are betting a \$100,000 life insurance policy on the fact that it *could* work. Humans frozen today *might* be revived and repaired within the next century. Technological advances in the last couple years have convinced a new wave of computer buffs, engineers and *Longevity* readers to sign up. They have seen potential in practices described in scientific journals, where it becomes possible to repair bodies one cell at a time—or to clone new cells. Many who signed up to have only their heads frozen are known in the biz as "neuropatients." Cryonists feel it's worth a shot in the dark.

"This dewar contains two patients," says Mondragon, lifting the lid in a cloud of nitrogen vapor. "The one behind you holds Dr. James Bedford, the first man to be put in cryonic suspension back in 1967." A dewar (say "do-er") is a huge stainless steel vacuum bottle designed by the guy who put his name on Dewar's Scotch. Other dewars in the room hold rows of bobbing head-sized canisters. The nine neuropatients.

"If enough of your structure is damaged beyond all recognition," says Mondragon, "to the point where you cannot infer what the functional state is from the damaged state, then I would agree: this person's dead; chuck 'em. But 99.9 percent of the time, that is just not the case."

"Cryonics is really very conservative medicine. The first rule of medicine is: Do no harm. It's harm to take someone that doctors can't help

today and feed him to insects or incinerate him.

"What these canisters really are are the world's simplest time machines."

Contrary to rumor, Walt Disney is not frozen. His corporation dismissed that tale long ago, and a Disney family friend says the very idea of a human Disney-pop upsets them. All three cryonics facilities in the US—the third is R.C. W. Ettinger's lab in Oak Park, Michigan—keep the identities of their members secret.

But if Walt had made provision to be frozen, so he could be thawed and begin putting giant mutants in mouse suits on the moon, the process would have gone like this:

Walt dies of a tainted corndog at Space Mountain. Hospital personnel read the Alcor bracelet that all members wear. An Alcor team of both salaried and volunteer members races down to Anaheim with their ambulance and the Mobile Advanced Life Support System (MALSS), which is a custom-made cart holding a resuscitator and the same heart-lung machine used during open-heart surgery. (If they have to go more than 500 miles outside of LA, the team has to bring a portable ice-bath cart that holds the body near 32

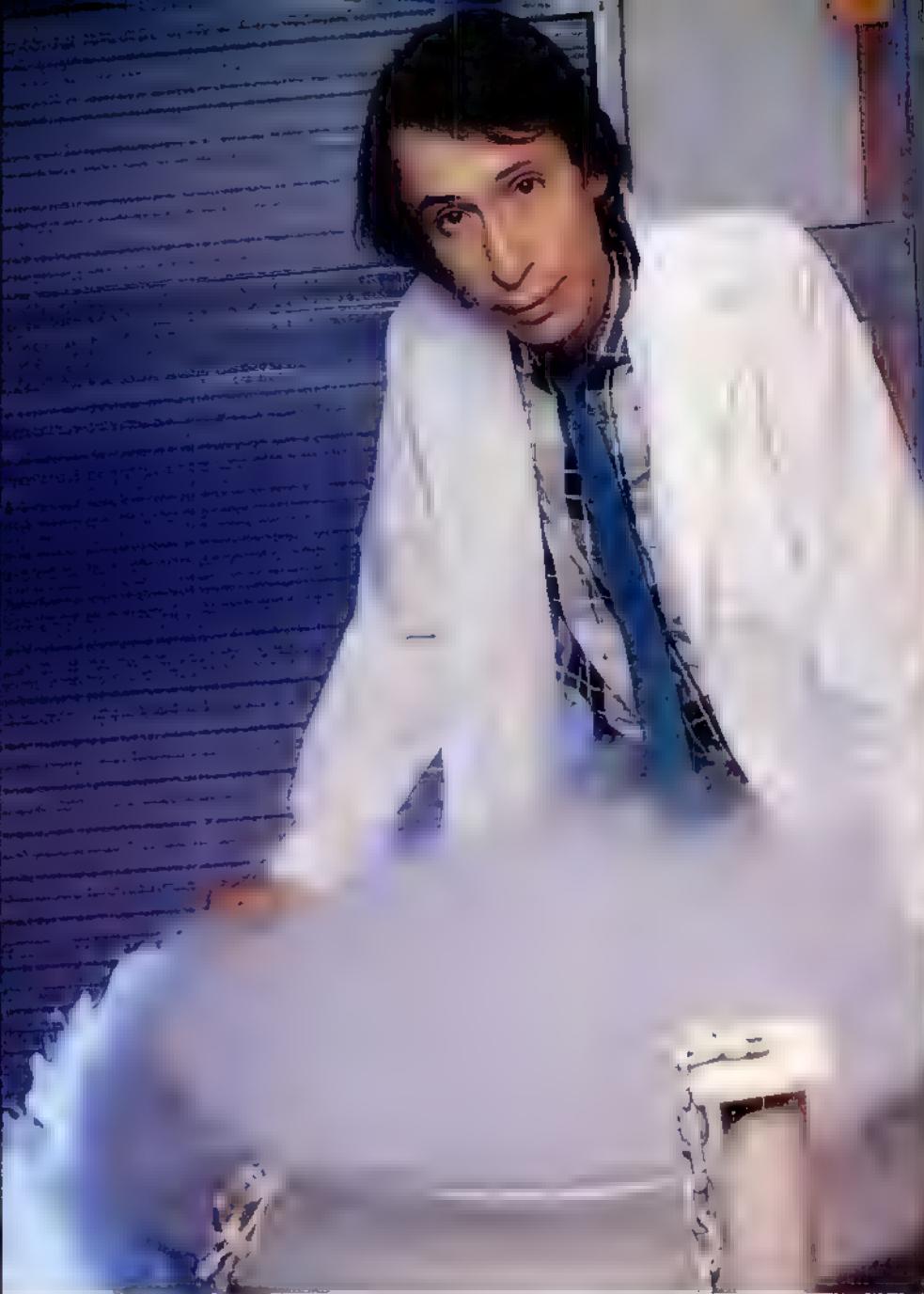
Cryonics is based on models found in nature. Many species of northern turtles and frogs, for example, can have as much as 50 percent of their tissues frozen solid under winter mud and thaw nicely in spring.

degrees F until they can get to a hospital or a mortuary.)

Seconds after he's pronounced legally dead, Walt is turned over to Alcor. On the MALSS, they attach the heart-lung machine through a femoral artery and begin the "blood washout," replacing it with a Tissue Preservative Solution. The MALSS also has a heat exchanger, which quickly lowers the body temperature to about two degrees C. At that temperature, he's safe from decay for about 24 hours.

After transport to Alcor's operating room, the heart is opened and the body is perfused with a cryoprotectant solution. The goal is to replace at least 30 percent of the body's water with glycerol, which will not freeze and crush cells like water does. This takes about four hours. Our man is wrapped in plastic and placed in a silicone oil/dry ice bath until he gradually reaches -79 degrees C, the temperature of dry ice. Then everyone takes a few days off.

Walt is placed in an ordinary sleeping bag and



Left: Alcor President Carlos Mondragon opens and occupied dewar. "I know the two people in here very well." Far left: Clong may allow neuropatients to choose new bodies. Far left, below: The Alcor team puts a member into liquid nitrogen.

have been chilled to almost freezing with no apparent health risks. Years ago, Alcor chilled a series of dogs.

"It'd been done before, in the 60s," explains Mondragon. "The animals were washed out, cooled down to two or three degrees centigrade—no heartbeat or respiration, no electrical activity in the brain—we were able to hold them there for up to four hours and get them back with no problems."

It is true that humans can drown in ice water for as long as 55 minutes and be revived without any apparent brain damage. At normal body temperature, the limit without oxygen is around four minutes. Cryonics opens the door to bloodless surgery and lengthy operations unheard of today. People in this cold state are *dead*—no breathing, no pulse, flatlined. You can turn the life support machines off at that temperature. Then they *reanimate* when warmed.

Dr. Segall repeated the dog chillings on his own beagle, Miles. The dog flatlined for hours with no resultant brain damage and has since become famous. Now Paul works with hamsters, actually freezing them solid in the quest for a cryoprotectant that works. So far, none have survived. But he has been able to kick-start their hearts.

Greg Fahy, a cryobiologist at the Red Cross lab in Bethesda, Maryland, has made breakthroughs in vitrification—a freezing process where water is completely eliminated from the tissues and they're frozen under pressure. At about -100 degrees C, vitrified tissues actually turn to a form of glass. Fahy has vitrified rabbit kidneys that thawed almost fully functional.

"Instead of racing across the country with a Lear jet to transplant a kidney, we'll just pick one up at the organ bank, thaw it out, and go," says Mondragon.

Timothy Leary is a neuro. It makes perfect sense that the guru of drug research, technology and human intelligence would want his head frozen. But he has a plan. He wants to colonize time with his people and have a reunion at an unspecified year beyond his death.

"I want to make sure that I don't wake up to a bunch of grim scientists. I want to see some smiling faces—some individualists, libertarians and far-out people. Revelers.

"We do know that cryonics folks are not going to be members of fundamentalist religious groups," says Leary. "Is that a utopia, or what? The organized religions are gonna come out dead against this. They'll probably try bombing cryonics places just like they bomb abortion clinics. Because this whole idea is pro-choice."

For more info on cryonics, watch for "On Ice," to be aired July 10th on PBS. Or write Dr. Timothy Leary, care of KnoWare, 11288 Ventura Blvd., Suite 702, Studio City, CA 91604.

suspended head down in a dewar. Liquid nitrogen is slowly added to the bottle, and within 20 days he's completely immersed in a liquid that boils at -320 degrees F. He's hard as a brick and invulnerable to decay. But the slightest bump could crack him.

Cryonicist Dave Christiansen strolls into the diner looking like any of the other punks living on the streets of Hollywood. His shoulder-length hair hangs over a Metallica T-shirt and a leather jacket. His thin arms end in black fingerless gloves holding a walkman. He's not a scientist, but a Reno runaway who's struggling to become a screenwriter. At 19, Dave has been a member of Alcor for more than a year.

"When I came to LA, I had some troubles—16 years old and living on the streets," says Dave.

"Alcor's like a big family. Nobody gives you an attitude. We have get-togethers and all the members show up. They sit in the Jacuzzi and swim in the pool and eat and talk about freezing. They believe that everyone is a human being, that they shouldn't be hurt, and that their rights should not be violated in any way."

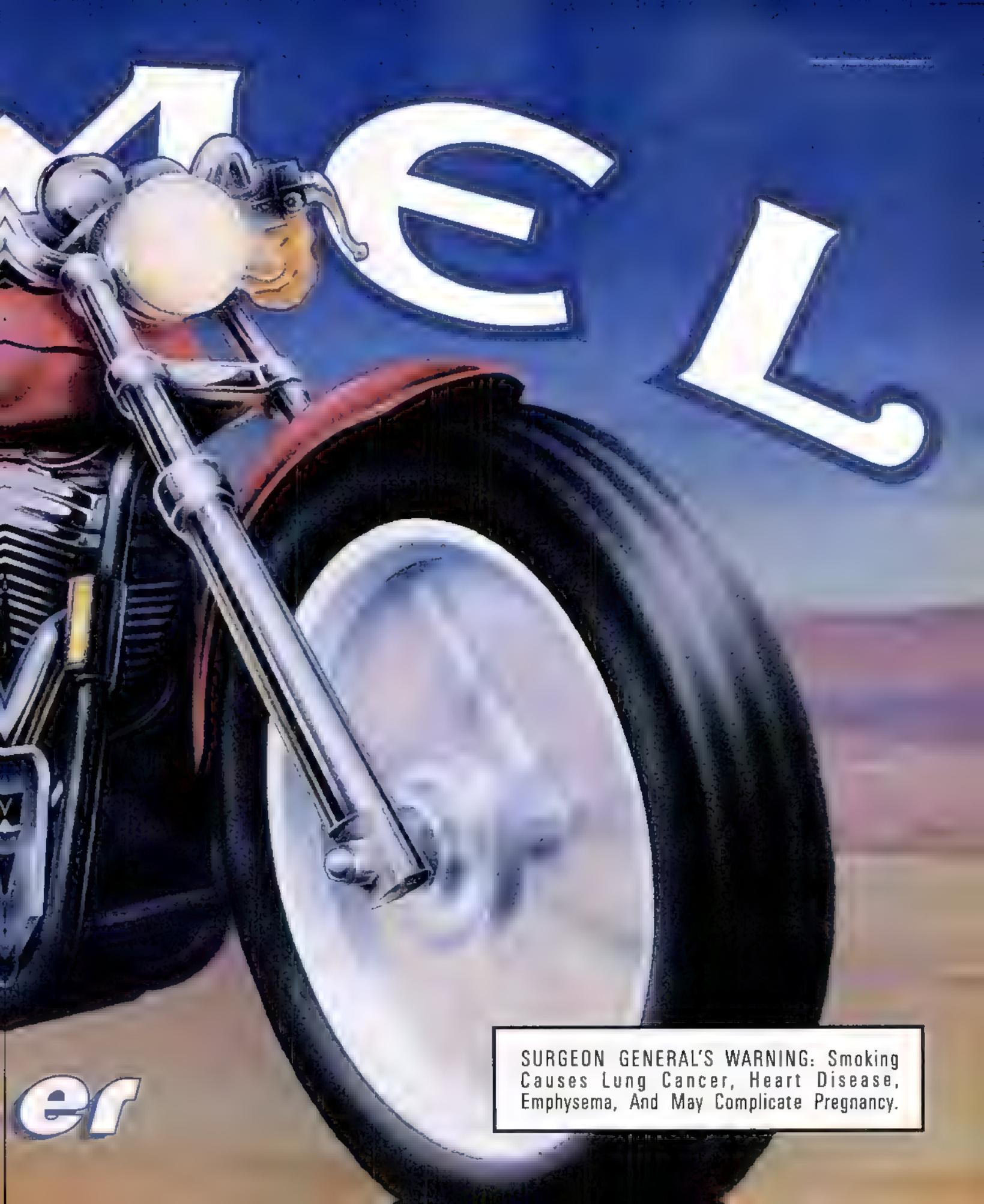
"I am afraid of death. Because I don't have any proof that there's anything over there. I don't see any reason why I shouldn't take another option in case one doesn't work. It's more productive than goin' out and takin' a beer and a joint."

Cryonics is based on models found in nature. Many species of northern turtles and frogs, for example, can have as much as 50 percent of their tissues frozen solid under winter mud and thaw nicely in spring. Mammals, however, have never been frozen and successfully revived. But they

Back to the Camel cigarette advertisement

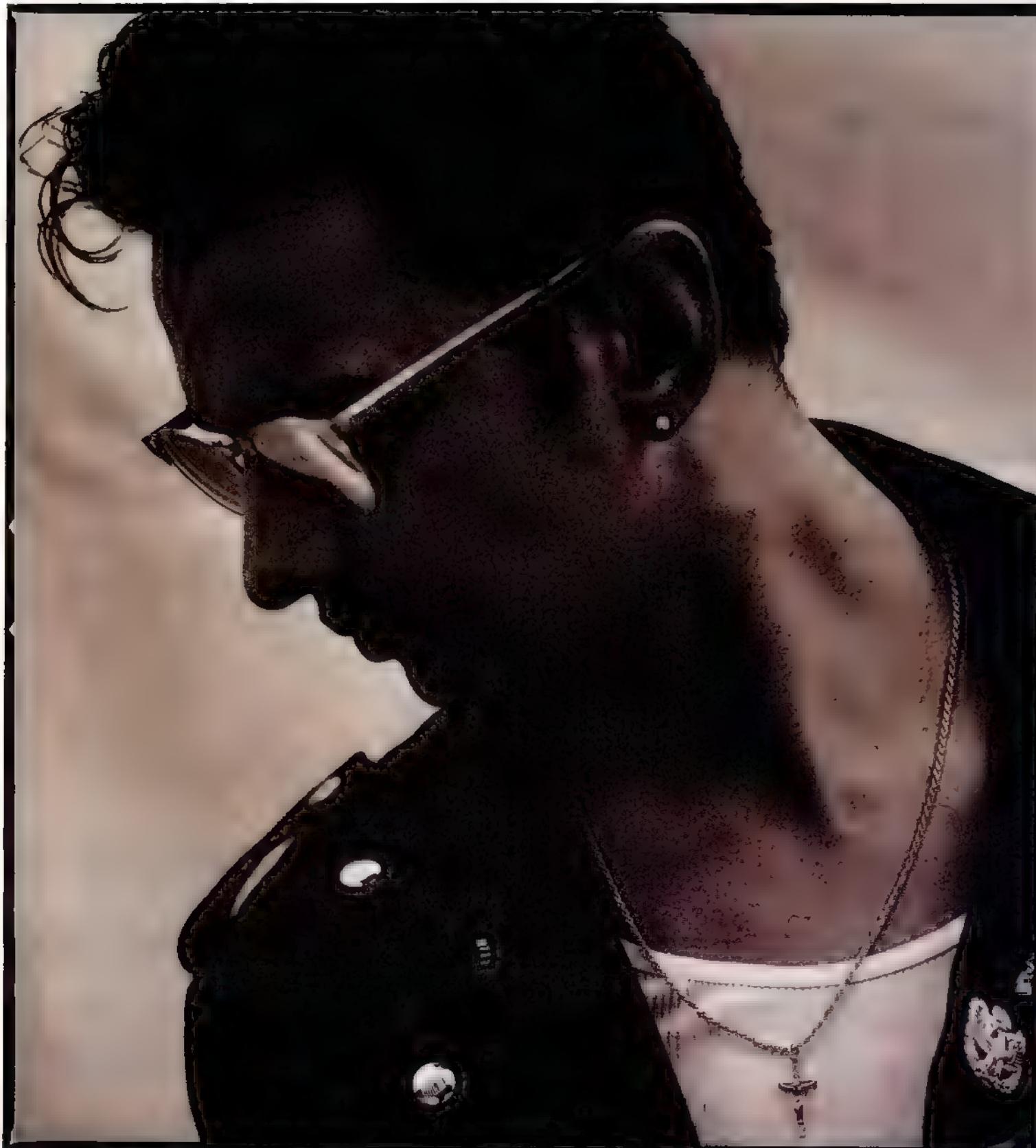


Smooth character



SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.

er



Pop ala Mode

Depeche Mode may not look dangerous. They certainly don't sound dangerous. Fact is, they're not dangerous. But watch out for their fans.

the last time Depeche Mode came to the US they caused a riot. A real riot—bottles thrown, windows shaken, lots of pressing, pushing and punching. Some 20,000 fans, many of them teenaged girls, had gathered at the Warehouse in Los Angeles for an in-store appearance. Some had waited for days. Fearing for the safety of the group, security guards disbanded the affair after a scant 45 minutes.

The crowd went wild; a few had to be taken to the hospital with minor injuries. Kelly Jaffray's mom got jabbed in the

Article by Marisa Fox

Photography by Anton Corbijn

ribs, so she punched some guy in the jaw. Depeche super-fan Kelly, 15, was herself safe in the VIP section of the store. "The band all know me and they let me in without any hassles," she boasts.

It's true, too. In fact, when Depeche's Andy Fletcher spotted Kelly, he gasped, "We can't go anywhere without you." "He was just joking," Kelly says. "I mean they respect me because I don't invade their space all the time. I'm not a groupie or anything. Like, I wouldn't just sleep with them or anything. Or like, they couldn't force me to take drugs, you know. But then, they wouldn't. I know them and I respect them and they respect me."

In many ways, Kelly is a typical valley girl. A teenager with blue eyes and softly waved blond hair, she loves to shop on Melrose and Hollywood. She buys Quick Silver and other neon surf clothes, wears Ug boots without socks, cruises with the guys cranking KROQ on the car stereo. She says things like "Oh my gosh," she's getting a BMW for her Sweet Sixteen and she'd never get into a car without a box of Depeche Mode tapes.

Kelly can't quite get through a day without listening to Depeche Mode. Her obsession has been going strong for years: it started with a single and a concert ticket. Now, 325 albums later, Kelly's one of their biggest collectors in the US, possibly the world. Her life revolves around Depeche Mode—she goes on trips to New York just to shop for Depeche paraphernalia. This year she's hoping to go to London to get even more colored vinyl, rare remixes, posters and books. Kelly would go to any length for her fix. "If I had to I might sacrifice my life for the sake of the group," she says, sighing.

kelly's mom understands. "When I was Kelly's age I was into the Stones and drag racing. These kids aren't as rowdy as we were, and that's good. That's why I

encourage it. It's a healthier habit than hanging out at the Jack in the Box and getting mixed up in a drive-by [shooting], or taking drugs and drinking." Her mom may have bopped along to "Satisfaction," but Kelly grooves to "Shake the Disease." Instead of the raunchy twang of Keith Richards's guitar, Kelly gets off on punchy rhythms programmed on synthesizers and drum machines.

Kelly was 13 when she first managed to catch a glimpse of her idols, backstage at the MTV Music Awards. "I was determined to meet them so I asked this guy who was an Aerosmith roadie to please help me. And he gave me a pass and I couldn't believe it. There they were," she says. "I first met their sound man, this guy named Darrel, and then I hung out with Alan Wilder. I was holding this old program from one of their shows and Martin Gore just came over and grabbed it and we started talking like we were friends."

Kelly could go on for hours, about the time she al-



most had dinner with them, the time she was up at KROQ with them, about the record company bigwigs she's met at their parties, about the 90 DM buttons she wore on her jacket for a special party, about some girl she saw leaving her hotel, all smiles and skirt half-unzipped.

"It's strange that we appeal to so many young kids but these aren't our only fans," says Andy Fletcher. "We have quite a lot who are older and who have been with us since the very start, for almost 10 years." Back in the early 80s, at the dawn of British synth-pop, Depeche Mode was more or less an underground act. As groups like Duran Duran and Human League blasted through MTV and Top 40 radio, Depeche Mode remained a faceless enigma. They were reluctant to have their picture on albums or magazines. They preferred to let their songs speak for themselves. Fronted then by Vince Clarke (who left early on to form Yaz, then Erasure), Depeche Mode were four suburban teens (Andy, Martin, Dave Gahan as lead singer and

later Alan Wilder) devoted to a then-experimental instrument—the synthesizer.

"To us, it was a punk instrument," explains the group's songwriter Martin Gore. "It was an instant, do-it-yourself kind of tool. And because it was still new, its potential seemed limitless." The music was a reaction to the 70s mega-rock legacy—big names, big jam sessions, big egos. "We found it all a bit impersonal," says Andy. "We don't think you have to be a great musician to be allowed to play and get a message out. I guess that's what punk was all about, getting rid of the ego and getting right down to it without having to be a session guitarist. We certainly didn't know anything about playing music when we first started. In fact, our only true musician is Alan Wilder."

"Their music just hits kids right between the eyes," explains KROQ DJ Richard Blade, who largely broke Depeche Mode on the West Coast. "They can relate to Martin's songs because he doesn't write about love

"There's a great tenderness and sadness to our music sometimes, and I know this is going to sound like a stereotype, but gays in general seem to be more open and receptive to these types of lyrics." —Martin

the way, say, a Richard Marx does, who comes up with 'I love you, I lost you, I'm sad.' Martin is about angst, about teenage love when it feels like the end of the world. You're so self-conscious that when somebody looks at you the wrong way, it can be devastating."

to Kelly, for instance, "Strangelove" has become almost a kind of mantra. "It talks about all the strange feelings you go through, you know? Lines like 'Strange highs and strange lows, will you give it to me? I will take the pain.' And their new song, 'Clean,' is about getting out of that pain and changing your routine. I just went through something like that with this guy. He was false to me, kind of like in 'Policy of Truth.'"

"It's real existential music," says Ken Patronis, a 28-year-old fan who works as a biostatistician at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Ken bought *Speak & Spell* at a time when he was also buying Bauhaus, early New Order and early Cure. But those bands have either parted ways or let him down. "I don't really listen to the Cure anymore and New Order's doing music for 'America's Most Wanted.' That kind of says it all. But with Depeche Mode, I know that I'll probably like whatever they put out. I guess I'm more prone to understand a song about feeling socially detached than your average Joe Blow. The band doesn't hit you over the head with this macho stance that so many pop bands have."

Which may be one reason Depeche were originally lumped in with openly gay groups like Frankie Goes to Hollywood and the Pet Shop Boys. It's a characterization that bothers the band. "I've never understood this misconception about us being homoerotic," says Andy, looking as straight as they come, in jeans, sweater and businesslike horn-rimmed glasses. "What about all those American heavy metal bands that wear tight leather, all this

makeup and teased out hair? How come that's not considered gay? Maybe it's not our look, it's our lyrics. Are they too sensitive for the American male? You can't be sensitive and straight at the same time?"

"There's a great tenderness and sadness to our music sometimes, and I know this is going to sound like a stereotype, but gays in general seem to be more open and receptive to these types of lyrics," Martin says. In fact, when the band first started out, a considerable portion of their fans were drawn from the gay club scene. This is no longer the case, as, in many ways, the band has come out of the closet, shedding more and more of their mystery with each new album.

Which is partly why they've become so accessible to pop listeners. In fact, they've even made their first appearances on mainstream stations like New York's Power 95, where they were accused of being "tacky" by old-time fans. But for better or worse, pop is Depeche's place.

"We're trying to bring credibility back to the medium," says Martin Gore, tousled blonde hair falling over his eyes. "Most pop songs just don't reflect life the way it really is. You can't be happy all the time. Throughout our career, I've tried to write good serious songs as well as escapist songs. I know we get accused a lot of being depressive, but our songs also have a certain get-on-with-it attitude. If life is bad, there's always something to give you solace."

This summer, when Depeche Mode hit the road on their *Violator* tour, fans will flock from city to city, swapping bootlegs, trading

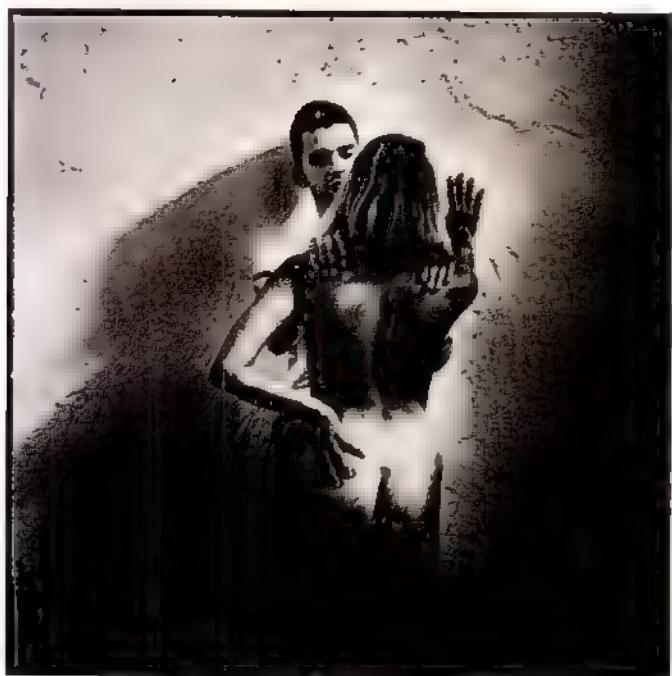
shirts and singing along to DM anthems like "Blasphemous Rumours" ("I think that God must have a sick sense of humour / And when I die I expect to find him laughing"). Some fans swear these concerts are powerful enough to affect natural phenomena. Richard Blade recalls their *Music for the Masses* appearance at the Hollywood Rosebowl Arena with a sense of amazement.

"They were doing 'Blasphemous Rumours' when suddenly it began to thunder and rain. Do you know how rare that is in the middle of LA in July? And then the band followed that up with 'Sacred' and the rain stopped. It was really weird."

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epeche seem to inspire that sort of thinking in lots of people. Take Tommy, a 17-year-old who drives a delivery truck part-time for a mattress wholesaler on Long Island. He likes to drink beer, smoke pot, hang out with his pals in the darkest corner of the A&P parking lot, leaning against his car cranking the latest in suburban teenage tuneage. Sure, they play Aerosmith, John Cougar Mellencamp and Bon Jovi. But Tommy and his friends also get off on Depeche Mode. Tom loves Depeche. When he learned they were in New York recently, he headed for their hotel, where he camped out for three days hoping to catch a glimpse of his heroes. "Hey, I'm straight, man, don't get me wrong," he says. "I didn't want to sleep with them or anything. I just wanted to meet them. Just talk to them, you know?" Or take Danny, a 20-year-old DJ called "The Brat," and a self-avowed diehard fan whose devotion to Depeche's music is reflected in his work. He recently crafted a landmark 56-minute-long Depeche Mode dance mix. "Their music goes with everything. You can always blend one of their songs into a megamix, no problem."

"I first got into them when 'Master and Servant' came out, perhaps not so much for the sexually provocative tone of the song but for its ahead-of-its-time technicolor groove. I'm not a big house fan, but I do



(Opposite) Martin Gore, Andy Fletcher, David Gahan, Alan Wilder—People are people; (right) Reach out and touch fate—David Gahan and "friend."



"I guess that's what punk was all about, getting rid of the ego and getting right down to it without having to be a session guitarist."—Andy

like industrial dance music, and to me, they really lead the way." The new LP *Violator* is to Danny another example of the way his favorite band dabble in new tricks. The album is more experimental than previous efforts, featuring songs that segue seamlessly into one another without clear breaks.

Depeche's commitment to experimentation extends to supporting other similarly inclined groups. They're taking label-mates Nitzer Ebb with them on this summer's tour, a harder-edged, less accessible electro-pop combo that's bound to appeal to someone like Danny. It probably won't go down as well with the 10-year-old fan who also likes New Kids on the Block. "I don't quite understand what a 10-year-old kid gets out of Depeche," says Danny, "but, hey, they have every right to come to the concerts, too. Just stick them in a soundproof section by themselves."

Like their early synth peers, Depeche realized they had to create something to transcend the potentially mind-numbing prospect of watching four guys sway gently behind their machines. They got Dave Gahan to sing and serve as what Andy Fletcher calls a "humanist conductor." Still, the band joke about never sweating onstage.

"Well, I'm not sure all rock bands sweat, anyway.

Unless the music is totally rocking, the guitarist usually just stands there, too," Andy says. And Martin joins in to defend his bandmate. "I mean, how interesting can it be to watch someone like Chuck Berry still doing the duck walk after twenty or thirty years? But for his fans, I guess that's their fascination. Our show is just different from anybody else's."

Unlike other techno-pop acts, Depeche shows are marked by a lively interplay between the band and the fans. "We don't try to manipulate our audiences the way more weirdo, pseudo-intellectual, electronic bands like Psychic TV do, not that I find them that way, but that's their thing. Ours is more of a warm, straightforward atmosphere," Andy says. It does seem fairly ridiculous to think of these guys, once dubbed "synth wimps," as devious manipulators. Sure, they play around with so-called sacrilegious themes, and Martin enjoys flashing bondage bracelets and the like, but they're not what you would call dangerous. Though many of their fans come from America's great subcultures, gay club-goers, rebellious teenagers and angst-ridden loners, Depeche are neither cut from the Duran Duran glam mold nor do they participate in the sneaky sublimation of a Throbbing Gristle. To Danny, Depeche Mode is more accessible than your average industrial act, and they're more intelligent than your average pop band. "They're very clever with their lyrics, and being a cynical person, I can really relate to

their songs." Particular lines stick in his head, like "Things like this make me sick—but in this case I'll stick with it," about the trials of being in love.

"Look, we don't have any easy answers for anybody," says Martin. "I write from my own personal experiences, how someone else wants to interpret them is fine with me. I keep my meanings open-ended because any reaction to a song is a valid one."

So what are his songs really about? Martin drops subtle hints. "I have a Top Ten list of topics," he says with a mischievous smile. "These include: relationships, domination, lust, love, good, evil, incest, sin, religion, immorality." For example, last summer's hit "Personal Jesus" is based on Priscilla Presley's idolatry of her King in her book *Elvis & Me*.

"It's a song about being a Jesus for somebody else, someone to give you hope and care. It's about how Elvis was her man and her mentor and how often that happens in love relationships; how everybody's heart is like a god in some way. We play these god-like parts for people but no one is perfect, and that's not a very balanced view of someone, is it?"

Because of the ambiguous nature of many of their lyrics, wildly different interpretations of some of the songs are possible. But that's part of the fun, as well as the point. To Kelly, for instance, "Blasphemous Rumours," once deemed blasphemous in its own right and nearly banned from the BBC, was written as a response to Martin's sister's suicide. "I believe he was real down on believing in any justice in the world and just hated God for taking away his sister," she says. But Martin's version is rather different.

"I was going to church a lot at the time, not because I believed in it, but because there was nothing else to do on a Sunday," he says. "I found the service very hard to take seriously. The whole setup is quite handy but I'm not sure that's what God intended. Particularly a part of the service called the prayer list, when the preacher rattles off a list of names of those sick and about to die. The person on the top of the list was guaranteed to die, but still everyone went right ahead thanking God for carrying out his will. It just seemed so strange to me, so ridiculous and so removed from real experiences."

Everyone, however, seems to be in agreement concerning the new album, *Violator*. "I think it's an awesome record," Kelly says. "This one's really gonna land them over the top," echoes Richard Blade. "There's a lot of beauty on it, with songs like 'Sweetest Perfection,' or the tenderness of 'World in my Eyes.' They definitely have matured in sound and their attitude is much more positive. But there's this soft, bittersweet quality still that touches a nerve with listeners."

For the record, the album shipped gold, and outsold anything Madonna or Prince ever put out in the UK. This summer will also land them in the biggest possible venues—from New Jersey's Giants Stadium to Oakland's Carrier Dome. The Warehouse record signing has made them a bit leery of their fans here, but they haven't recorded in horror. The next day, the band tried to clear things up on the air in Los Angeles, and they're in the midst of putting out an exclusive pressing of rare interviews as well as previously unreleased material for all the fans who couldn't get into the store. "Daniel Miller is pressing 25,000 copies and they'll go to anyone in the area who sends in a stamped, self-addressed envelope to KROQ from the LA area," Blade says. "That shows how devoted the band is to their fans and that's why their fans stick with them. They always go that extra mile for them."



HAWAIIAN SHIRTS FOR YOUR FEET.

You're hanging ten in Maui or you're just stepping into your hot tub. Fine. You'll need a few things. First, you'll need a solid rubber outsole for traction. Then you'll need a spandex upper for breathability. Like gills, sort of. And you'll definitely need some wacky colors to make the fish think you're one of them. In short, you'll need NIKE Aqua Socks. Remember: when the going gets wet, the wet go Hawaiian.







Texas Crude

The Butthole Surfers—
Humor and horror on a Texas scale.

9:00 AM, March 19, 1990. I woke up with my boots on, lying in a shaft of central Texas sun that came through the ranch house door. I pried one eye open and groaned, letting Mr. Cigar, Gibby Haynes's Jack Russell terrier, lick the other one 'til it came open. My feet were hot and the room was mauve. I experienced a moment of utter regret. The TV hissed and the crusty odor of stale cigarettes and pot and half-empty cans of Coors rankled on the table next to my swollen head.

Waking up fully clothed has meant one of three things in my life: camping out, having an accident or owing someone an apology. I dug out my wallet and winced: it was empty except for my doctor's card, my lawyer's card and a cash receipt for \$150 from an Austin, Texas, topless bar called Sugar's. A Cabaret. When Butthole Surfer vocalist Gibby Haynes and I had roared away from the Butthole ranch in Driftwood, Texas, hours earlier, \$250 had been in there.

I pulled bassist Jeff Pinkus's dog, Lincoln, off my ear and bolted for the bathroom. Nitrous oxide, those silver demon eggs that whipped-cream connoisseurs know as Whip-Its . . . the KISS masks . . . Bunny, the amateur stripper . . . the first bout of dry heaves brought the whole evening back.

The night before, Gibby, Jeff Pinkus, their pal C and I had tumbled out of an Austin bar and pool hall around 11:00 PM, then made a side trip out to a convenience store aptly named the "Whip Inn" to pick up 12-packs of beer and Whip-Its. The next thing I knew, I was toddling about G's couch with an inhaling canister in my hand. Gibby's grinning mug was melting, the walls pulsed and everyone bobbed violently to the deafening throb of a house music tape made by the Butthole Surfers' alter-ego band, the Jack Officers. Greg whipped out some KISS makeup masks. Funny how KISS can still make you laugh so hard you piss yourself.

Then the very fabric of the time-space continuum sort of folded, and we were sitting down at a bar table with naked women. The amateur-night girls in this titty bar called Sugars: A Cabaret had laughing

Article by Dean Kuipers

eyes and soft breasts like air. Buttholes & Co. settled in, surrounded themselves with naked flesh and spent the next few hours maligning the lyrics to the girls' rock 'n' roll soundtrack. A topless marvel named Cat talked with G and kept slapping me. Our waitress brought more and more of these wretched \$10 Cocaine Cocktails or—even worse—Russian Quaaludes.

"These drinks taste like Robitussin," Jeff shouted

Don King, the night manager at Sugar's: A Cabaret appeared at our table and threw down a round of free-drink business cards. Suddenly there was God's voice, booming.

"Sugar's would like to extend a big, wet, sloppy kiss to the Butthole Surfers and our friend from SPIN magazine!!!"

Fingered! And a huge voice was telling us we had carte blanche here! While the girls drank up our second round of Don King's free drink cards, I got up and lurched into the dancers' dressing room with two fingers hooked into the G-string of a girl named Bunny

And woke up clutching my wallet to the sound of a water bong bubbling far off over the breezy, green Texas hill country. Genius Butthole guitarist Paul Leary showed up at the ranch around 9:00 AM to work in their private studio.

"I know absolutely nothing about what I'm doing," smirks Paul, knee-deep in dumped 1/4-inch mastering tape cut from the new album. In an adjacent room are amps, including an original 1964 Marshall head. Guitars are strewn about: a Firebird, a Jackson, a sweet custom Les Paul. A closet holds about a dozen more. "I've been a guy who's had money and loves sound equipment and guys sold me all kinds of shit, so we've got to make the stuff pay for itself. And we have."

The Butthole Surfers are Texas hardcore's most relentless anomaly, a gypsy commune of killer clowns revelling in their own morbid fascinations. Few people, it seems, can bear themselves away from the Buttholes' live spectacle, or the real threat of random mindfuck captured on their recordings. Birthed in a San Antonio living room in 1981, the Buttholes have honed an instinct for art that reveals the grotesque, the horror and the humor in free association without boundaries—like Gibby's drawing of a trussed-up Chinese man projecting worm movies from his penis. Or the backwards, mid-Eastern folk melody from "Kuntz," on 1987's *Locust Abortion Technician*, where the refrain is a fractured chorus chanting "cunt," the lowest of them sounding like a flabby fart.

They disgust nearly everyone, yet no one finds them patently offensive. They've become notorious at no one's expense. Rather, their art is an indictment—one that says to me: "We are the hunters and gatherers of dream logic, and we are splashing around in the raw info-tainment of violence and psychosis. On the way to some freedom we will pass through our own orifices and stinks, because everyone has them. We might find either a fistfight or an orgasm or the best fuckin' joke you ever heard."

And their cult continues to spread. There are few Butthole Surfer virgins anymore. When they come to town for one of their periodic psychoevents, the masses gather. The Buttholes have loomed large in the indie underground over the last nine years, spewing seven LPs, three EPs, countless bootlegs and one unreleased house project. Fans still instinctively come to suck at the band's onstage mythos: the most brutal, dangerous and hilarious band this country's ever known.

Later that evening, on the lanes at the Wimberly Astro Bowl, we worked our way down from Coors to Busch, scratching for a title to the new Butthole Surfers studio album.

"Jane Nixon's Red Hot Mojo Chili Garden of Sonic Nigger Addiction," chuckled Gibby between frames. "No, wait: Jane's Red Hot Nixon Nigger Chain With Sonic Mojo Attitude ... No ..."

Time and inertia have stripped the Butthole Surfers down from a crew of six to four: Gibby, Paul, Jeff and drummer King Coffey. They remain as aloof and obtuse as they've ever been. Their notoriety has taken its toll. After a decade of work, they'd like some major-label recognition, but the Surfers' history of taking axes to record industry offices has made them anathema. Today the band is feared by the industry that could turn their out-of-work status into money—the money they need for bigger, louder multimedia shows.

Gibby: We probably suck. Who knows? They might be ashamed to tell somebody they're pushing the Butthole Surfers; Guns N' Roses is bad enough. At least they get a huge amount of money from Guns N' Roses insulting—what was it?—blacks, homosexuals and immigrants inside of ten lines. [phone rings]

Nigger! Farm worker! Queer! [into phone] Hello? Yeah, man, what's goin' on?



The world's most irreverent, greasy, Southern-fried rock'n'roll band squeeze every drop of excess out of their working day. It might end in an orgy. It often ends in a fistfight. Once it ended in a Mexican police riot.

hangs up. Maybe some of those people are just embarrassed. Maybe after they shit, they think they're wiping a lily or something down there.

Paul: They're probably embarrassed for us. 'Cause we'd certainly never admit embarrassment ourselves.

Gibby: No way. That's all part of our embarrassment.

Few people know that the 15-second jingles you've heard between videos on MTV for the last year were done by the Buttholes. "It's pretty fun to turn on MTV every hour on the hour and know that they can't say our name on MTV but they play us more than any other band," says Jeff.

The reason for their exile status is plain. This band has never compromised. Not once. On anything. What you get on Butthole Surfer discs and in their anal y expressive stage show is the unretarded fire and phlegm of off-hand social critics. Onerousness now has the Buttholes taking potshots at the acts that Gibby calls "press machine bands," many of whom, like the Red Hot Chili Peppers, used to open shows for the Surfers.

The Butthole Surfers are arguably the most successful self-produced, self-promoted band to survive the heyday of hardcore without a major deal. At the dawn of the 90s, they've struck something of a balance between piss-wal owing insanity and recognizable totems of success. Their Driftwood ranch commune is a thriving, ever-growing glom of

guitars, master tape, MIDI equipment, computers, Whip-Its, hot rods and dogs.

"There's a time to fuck and a time to PRAY! / But the Shah sleeps in Lee Harvey's GRAVE!!"

New York's Danceteria, 1986. All four floors of owner Rudolph's ultrahip club are loaded with rock'n'rollers struggling to keep up with the city's performance scene. On the ground floor, a couple hundred people stand about gawking at the Butthole Surfers. The band is loosely flogging away at some material from their first four records—"A Brown Reason to Live" (also released as "Pee Pee the Sailor"), *Psychic Powerless: Another Man's Sac* "Cream Corn" and *Rembrandt Pussyhorse*—when the band's gestalt takes a hard turn toward the weird

"There's a time to shit and a time for GOD! / The last shit I took was pretty fuckin' ODD!!"

Gibby howls the stanzas of "Bar-B-Q Pope" through a bank of digital delays and reverbs as Paul's psychotic guitar follows his smashed-pupil stare through the ionosphere. The Surfers are monumentally fucked up, having been drinking steadily for days and taking acid in order to stay awake and drive a small van more than 3,000 miles from LA to make this one gig. Some of the people leave the room. Kathleen, the Butthole dancer, writhes naked on a small podium between the flailing arms of stand-up drummers King and Teresa Taylor, the three of them hot-frozen in a blasting strobe light. Cabbage, sometime-drummer and dancer, swings onstage, naked except for a road commission worker's day-glo safety-vest.

"There's a time for drugs and a time to be SANE! / But Jimi Hendrix makes love to Marilyn's REMAINS!!"

Onstage, an instructional film for surgeons shows how a team of doctors reconstruct the shredded penis of an Iowa farmer who got his jeans and genitalia caught in a combine. [King: "It's a success story, actually."] Next to it, tarantulas six feet tall are juicing centipedes in Walt Disney's "Secrets of the Desert." Then come the Ohio State Police films, "Highways of Death."

King and Teresa—the mute rhythm twins of some methadine tribe with electric hair—are reduced to flailing arms by the pulse of the strobe. Smoke curls over the monitors. Cabbage slides over and begins to pull Gibby out of his clothes, pulling him down to the stage on top of her. In a few minutes the band is naked and there are only sporadic noises. Gibby claims "penetration." Kathleen says it never happened.

"The video was just flashing lights and butts and legs," says Paul.

The crowd, many of whom are also massively fucked up or screwing each other in the bathroom, are starting to get agitated and pushy. A "goon squad"—as one fan put it—moves in and starts tossing fans out. But the management makes no move to stop the live sex show on stage.

Gibby, Kathleen and Cabbage peed in these plastic Fred Flintstone whiffle-ball bats—there's a hole in the end, you know, and they peed in there—and they were dousing the crowd with them.

Paul: They were pisswands.

Jeff: That's when the Danceteria dude told us we would never be able to play New York again. I understood, too.

"There's a time to live and a time to DIE! / I smoke
Elvis Presley's toenails when I wanna get HIGH!!"

Jeff and I lurch through the quiet lawn of mimosas and live oaks out to his blue 72 Dodge Polara for a 15-mile run to the Taco Farm Cafe. The band's other vehicles are standing by: the white van; the legendary "Dixie Mobile Home Sales and Service" van; Gibby's 66 Galaxy 500 XL and 59 Ford Sedan, and Paul's new Ford Bronco. "I bought this car for about 700 bucks," drawls Jeff. "The first thing I did was put a \$900 stereo in it."

Both Jeff and Gibby talk incessantly of hot rods. Jeff's checking out a 69 Charger. Gibby has a 49 "Shoebox Chevy" Coupe that is in the process of being refitted with a front end, a shortblock 400 and a new paint job. He also has a true prize—a 37 Lincoln Coupe which is completely stripped down to a frame and a solid body. Those two cars are going to be strictly hot rod, fuel-injected competition vehicles in the true Texas tradition.

Jeff pulls out a cassette of Helios Creed's latest album *The Last Laugh* and jacks it in at about 80 decibels. We careen out to Route 150.

Paul and King live in Austin now, while Teresa and Kathleen have left the band altogether. Teresa is in Austin starting an all-female band called The Deadbeat Girlfriends. Kathleen's new band Berne Seed are in New York recording their second album.

Jeff and Gibby still live in the three-bedroom, two-bath ranch house, but the place feels like a camp. There's no food. Nobody seems to want coffee in the morning. The refrigerator doesn't have shelves in it—just a bunch of beer and styrofoam fast-food containers piled up in the bottom. Maybe that's because their visitors bring them gifts of booze—I did—but it's more

likely that they're caught up in a cult of those fast foods they worship, having memorized dozens of commercial jingles, like the one for Taco Bell, off the TV.

Most of the Surfers' neighbors are cattle ranchers with big spreads. We rumble by herds of Brahmans and hybrid Brangus heifers.

"We love breakfast tacos," says Jeff at the Taco Farm Cafe. "But it always brings back bad memories of Tijuana."

Fans still instinctively come to suck at the band's onstage mythos: the most brutal, dangerous and hilarious band this country's ever known.

A double bill in Tijuana with the Red Hot Chili Peppers on September 23, 1989, has become the latest example of the Butthole's weird confluence of popularity and notoriety.

Jeff explains, "Paul threw a beer bottle toward their chicken screen that they had covering the monitor set-up, 'cause the monitors weren't working at all. And Gibby accidentally got someone in the head with his guitar

"So they threw us outside, and the federales took over. They had us up against the car and said, 'You're in Mexico now, son.' And the guy gave me probably around six to eight kidney punches with like three of 'em holdin' me down. I was pissin' blood for two days. They had hauled Gibby to a downtown alley, where like four guys punched him out and broke a couple of

his ribs—luckily, our sound man, when they had Gibby, went up to him and took as much money as he could find out of Gibby's pocket—so we'd have some left. They'd gone through my wallet, but I didn't have no cash on me, except for maybe 20 bucks. That's the money we were gonna use for the rest of the tour."

"Well, son, the funny thing about regret is that it's better to regret something you have done than something you haven't. Oh, and—by the way—if you see your mother this weekend, be sure and tell her...SATAN! SATAN! SATAN!"

High school buds Paul and Gibby were at Trinity College in San Antonio when they decided to write a few songs in Paul's living room. Paul's dad, in fact, was the head of the finance department and had both of them as students when Gibby was selected as Accounting Student of the Year. The two of them messed around with some songs based on Gibby's poems, and a few months later an Austin hardcore act called the Big Boys allowed them onstage.

By 1983, Paul had finally quit his job at the lumber mill. Gibby was thrown out by the accounting world. He'd failed to capitalize on a free ride to a Florida clown school which had been set up by his father, Jerry Haynes, who has his own children's TV show, "Mr. Peppermint," on the ABC affiliate in Dallas. Nothing left to do but...surf.

"Brown Reason to Live" ("Pee Pee the Sailor") deranged the rock music mind forever. This 1983 Butthole EP featured

Continued on page 94



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Let Lenny Rule

Nouveau hippie love child Lenny Kravitz is both a musician with a lot of marketing to live down and a vibrant new talent tailor-made for the multicultural 90s.

Article by Christian Wright

Lenny Kravitz met Lisa Bonet backstage at a New Edition concert in California. He knew the drummer; she was dating someone at MCA. He saw her standing there, walked over and said, "I like your hair." She said she liked his, too. At the time she had a really cool short haircut and so did he. They exchanged phone numbers. The next day, purely by coincidence, they encountered each other at a jazz festival. They became friends, just friends, and maybe that's the best way to start. Then one day, on impulse, they flew to Vegas and were married.

"Usually," says Kravitz in a voice so sleepy it's as if someone has just woken him up in the middle of the night—except it's the middle of the afternoon, "when you meet somebody you like right from the beginning, there's that whole infatuation thing and the dating thing and the do-I-look-good? thing. With Lisa there was none of that. It was like, 'Oh, Lisa.' I'd look like shit and just hang out. There were no walls to put up or anything."

Lenny Kravitz—25 and as open as French doors in the spring—wears a stretched and faded T-shirt, baggy, worn jeans and Berkenstock sandals. His hair is a disheveled mass of dreads falling over his ears, one of which is adorned with five hoops like a 14K gold barbed wire fence. If you didn't know that he grew up in New York and LA and once went by the name of Romeo Blue, you might think him somebody who's at one with nature, like a farmer. His hands are small, weathered, carrying the weight of three massive rings—crystals, crude and uncut. And his calm is unsettling.

Kravitz calls his music soul music, raw like the jagged-edge crystals on his fingers. His debut, *Let Love Rule*, bleeds with tender naivete, the almost belligerent idealism of a boy-man who believes in God and

utopia. His mother and John Lennon taught him to trust in himself; Prince and Curtis Mayfield taught him to strain his voice so he sounds like he's in pain when he's actually rejoicing. In high school he wrote romantic love notes and poetry. In conversation he speaks of love and honesty. On record he sings of love's omnipotence. But it's all quite spiritual, in need of no qualification or reassurance, love that exists above expectation, ethereally. *Let Love Rule*, in spite of forcefully sexy guitar squeals and passionate lyrics, is completely devoid of sex. It's more like a vast bed—left empty at dusk, white sheets strewn about, still warm. The embrace without the grip.

Kravitz and Bonet began to spend all their time together. She lived in Hollywood, he in Venice, his car broke down so he borrowed hers. And eventually he moved in with her even though they still had other lovers. "If my car had been working during that time, I probably wouldn't be married to her," says Kravitz. "But we were together every day. It started to be this thing—every day, wake up, take her to work, pick her up. We'd have dinner and then I guess it was one day we realized like we couldn't be apart or something."

Until he was 11, Kravitz lived in New York City with his very close family. "We weren't the camping style of family," he says. "We went to the islands a lot—that's where my mom's from. We did a lot of city things, music things, plays, cultural things. My mom used to do Poetry in the Park and Broadway, and my dad was a producer and assignment editor for NBC News. I had that sort of New York City kid thing. It was cool." His family moved to LA when his mother got the part of Helen Willis on "The Jeffersons" and Lenny was accepted into the California Boys Choir. It was there he learned the self-discipline that gets him up at 8 o'clock, sometimes 7:30, and into the studio. While

growing up, he taught himself to play guitar, bass, drums and keyboards, all of which he does on his record, with occasional organ and piano accompaniment.

A friend of his mother's gave him a recommendation for Beverly Hills High. "I know, Beverly Hills High, that's really out," says Kravitz. "I didn't live in Beverly Hills, but it was like the good school to go to, so I did Yeah, it was wild."

"When I first got there I had just gotten off the Boys Choir, so I had sort of long curly hair and I dressed in jeans and T-shirts and shit. Then—that school was like a fashion show, like a big prep thing, and all the kids are rich and the guys are wearing these plaid, green and red, Ralph Lauren slacks, Topsiders and polo shirts and all that shit. I didn't do that for a long time, but maybe for a couple of months I did. The pressure was so intense that I actually cut my hair really short and I wore turquoise polo shirts, 501s, and fucking Topsiders and penny loafers and shit. Then I just said, 'Fuck it.' I couldn't deal with it. Then I straightened my hair and spiked it on top and started dying my hair different colors, kind of started turning into my own person. Started doing my music and stuff."

"But I really was friends with everybody. Lunchtime in the cafeteria, you know, the blacks are in one corner with their radios, all the preps are in another corner. Then there's the hard rockers, then the hippies. I had friends all over the place. I wasn't stuck in one group. I was one of the weird guys who did music and one of the guys who could never get a girlfriend. Because I was nice to girls."

"I remember I had this girl I liked and she didn't like me but she liked this guy who treated her like shit and like was running around on her, playing on her. But all the girls loved that then, 'cause it was like a thing."



I got this young prostitute off the street. I took her away from her pimp and risked my ass and snuck her into my house for a month. She slept under my bed and shit, it was deep.

trying to get this guy that really was an asshole that didn't like them. So I was like the nice one the girls could talk to. It sucked. And finally, like three, four years later, it's like all the girls want a nice guy. They all changed."

Maybe Lenny Kravitz is a new hippie with an old soul or maybe his neo-bohemia is the supreme pretense. Either way he's convincing. He even uses crystals to cure his headache

SPIN: You live in an apartment with lots of people? It's like a commune. It's cool. It would cost a fortune to put everybody up. Right now it's costing to go on the road. You gotta save money. It gets touchy sometimes but for the most part it's cool. It's just like a big loft that has one big living room and two bedrooms, so the people who are married can have a bedroom. It's not that big. I don't like to act like the chief. I have a hard time with that. Obviously there has to be a leader, a band leader, but I don't like that sort of—a lot of

musicians get that tyranny attitude, you know, but it's really equal. When it comes to rehearsing music, obviously they're playing my music so it's got to be, but as far as living at home we're all equal. We have meetings as much as we can, 'cause when you're living so close to all these people shit gets out of hand. People trip out, because people have different living habits, some are slobs, some are really neat. Everybody eats differently, everybody wants something different. So we try to talk every few days and like, okay, what's on everybody's mind. Oh yeah, I'm pissed off, let's do this. It's cool. So I wouldn't say I man the place

You talk about honesty a lot. Given the nature of the entertainment industry, how honest can a rock'n'roll star be?

I grew up, my mom in the industry, my dad and the people around me, I was never into that. My mom always taught me good values about learning who I was and when the gig is over and you're not number

one, you gotta know who you are so you don't fall apart, and there's people that ride high and then all of a sudden it's over and they're not hot anymore and they freak and lose their minds and don't know what to do. She always taught me about the real things in life. I have a real old-fashioned mom. My grandmother and grandfather taught me a lot, so getting back, I grew up just not being into all that bullshit, all that hype, the Hollywood stuff. I did go through a time of like, that Romeo Blue phase was a phony time for me, it wasn't me. So I know what posing feels like. I was a dick then. That was when I was really into my David Bowie phase. I wanted to be David Bowie more than anyone else in the world. I was totally a David Bowie freak. I had like bone-straight hair, spiked, short on the sides I wore really nice clothes, like Yoji Yamamoto, Matusda, Comme Des Garcons, all this expensive shit, and I used to even be like him, really dramatic, dark. I wore blue contact lenses, I was wild. And that was before they were out. I had this eye doctor who

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was a friend of mine. He used to do them for Universal Studios for movies. He hand-painted these things, the most gorgeous, not like the soft lenses. I was really out there. And it was a trip to see me walk down the street. I looked like an alien. But slowly I stripped that away and ended up being myself again. God, everybody wants to be somebody else. Bowie wanted to be Bob Dylan. Everybody wants to be somebody else at first, if not always. John Lennon wanted to be Elvis Presley.

I was one of the weird guys
who did music and one of the
guys who could never get a
girlfriend. Because I was nice
to girls.

Do you try to make a difference with your songs?

Not in every single song. Some songs are for fun, but yeah, well it sounds really old, it's this whole hippie thing again, but to me until there's at least a better condition of living or peace, there's no point in stopping singing about. So I'm singing about it. I don't even know if I really know why—I mean I know why, 'cause I stand for all those things. But it's sort of like I didn't choose it, it just came to me. So it's like God's saying, "Here, this is what you're gonna do." Even if you don't realize it at first. But I do stand for all the things that I sing. It's not like I'm channeling. But yeah, I'd like to make a difference. I'm not trying to be the savior but we've all got to do our little thing.

It is idealistic, but you've got to try. I mean, why do the good things that you do? I believe in peace. I believe in getting along, all of us being as one, and looking at this place as a planet instead of separate little places. When you're up in a spaceship and look at the world, it's one place. We're all fucking with our future and we don't even realize it. Maybe we do realize it, but a lot of people don't. I'm into the world coming together, if that ever happens. Maybe it'll take a great tragedy first.

We can take one person, say, a little girl listening to the radio, and she hears what I'm saying, maybe not the first time, but after listening. And maybe it'll make her think a little differently. You get one person to see things differently, and then that person will treat others differently.

What's the most selfless thing you ever did?

Are you gonna print this? Well, no, no, it's okay. I got this young prostitute off the street, which was a big ordeal. A girl I still know very well. We're close. But she was like 13 or 14. I took her away from her pimp and risked my ass and went into the motel and put her in my car and snuck her into my house for a month. She slept under my bed and shit, it was deep. Until my parents caught me. I was 17. I met her at a club. It was deep. It's actually, I've never told anybody this, but that's what "My Precious Love" is about. People always think it's about Lisa, but it's about this girl. I still see her. She's doing well, I see her when I'm in LA. I didn't think of it like, "Oh, I'm saving this girl." I just met this girl and it blew my mind. She was so pretty and so sweet and we were talking and she started crying. She told me the whole thing. I was that kind of guy. I was always like sneaking people, doing shit for people. My parents always said, "You're always doing things for everybody except yourself." My grandmother was always saying, "Look out for Lenny. Look out for Lenny."

Do you think racial intolerance is increasing?

Racism? I don't know if it was ever not bad. It was just covered up for a while. Other problems get buried and one has more attention. It's bad.

I never used to think about it, especially coming from an interracial marriage, my parents' marriage, the product of one, I don't get it at all. My family's all kinds of colors. It's sad. It's fucked up. Zoe's (Lisa and Lenny's daughter) around so many people, so many different kinds of people. She's gonna be hot. She's gonna be a happening little kid. She'll just know, 'cause I'll tell her about people. There's two kinds of people: good and bad, no matter what the fuck color they are. I'll teach her, I'll teach her that we're all equal, we're all the same, we're all God's children. She'll probably ask, "Well, why are we black and why are these people white?" And you explain that whole thing, where people come from. But as long as she knows to respect everybody. It's difficult. And I guess when the time comes I'll know what to tell her. I haven't really thought about it much.

What makes you happy?

Just hanging out with my friends and my family, music, recording, simple things, the sunshine on a nice day. I like when people who are totally different from you can come with you. One day, Lisa and I were walking in the street on Madison and like 82nd, in the old neighborhood where I grew up, and we went to buy this bread, and this old Jewish couple walked by. Really old. They were together. They were really cute. And they made a comment about the bread that they wanted to buy, but it was too expensive. So Lisa and I started breaking this bread with them in the middle of fucking Madison Avenue. We gave them this bread and we're all eating it. It was really incredible. If you think about it, there we were breaking bread on Madison Avenue with this couple who were totally snooty, Jewish, dressed up. And we had this great little three minutes. Us, these freaky kids with rings in our noses and dreads. Stuff like that. That was cool.

Yet at the same time in the same neighborhood I was getting hassled. There was this place that was available for rent for a few months. I wanted to take my kid back to the block that I grew up on. And the building was trying to get us out. The block wasn't digging it that these two like Rasta people were moving in. All of a sudden black people were entering the building. They told the people who owned the building they didn't feel safe anymore 'cause black people were coming in and all this kind of shit.

What music do you like?

Ziggy Marley, Tracy Chapman. I like all the stuff that's happening now. I watch MTV. I like mostly older stuff. Al Green, Curtis Mayfield, Aretha, Bob Marley, Hendrix, Beatles, Dylan, Lennon, Cream. Soul II Soul, I love that fucking record, a contemporary classic. I love that. Love Bowie, of course. All of it. There's not a song I don't like. He's got so much fucking style, man. He's great.

You think you have more soul than John Lennon? You were quoted as saying that.

No, no, no, no. Someone said, um, that, "How do you feel being compared to John Lennon something?" and I said "Well it's like such 'n' such, that kind of music, but with a little more soul," meaning the music part, like my stuff has more gospel/soul roots. That man was soul. No, I just meant the music style, y'know, and then I said "but yet he was hellaciously soulful." That he was really soulful. No, no, no, no, no, no.

What makes you sad?

People who treat other people like shit. Unfairness. That everyone doesn't have a nice place to live and doesn't eat every night. It shouldn't be like that. I try not to be sad too much.



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THIS IS AMERICA

Edited by Lauren Spencer

mean streets

After 26 years, the controversial novel, *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, has finally made it to the big screen. Author Hubert Selby, Jr., rhapsodizes on the origins of his great novel of the Sixties.

Hubert Selby, Jr., was in sad shape. He was 30 years old, living in a low-rent housing project in Red Hook, Brooklyn, trying to support a family on \$60 a week. He hadn't been able to breathe well since doctors had collapsed one lung, cut up another and removed ten ribs after he contracted tuberculosis as a teenager in the Merchant Marines. The medication was still driving him crazy. Walking was agony. He had to move his legs by hand. He was learning how to write with a limited formal education. He would sit for three hours in front of the typewriter and get one word written. He was an alcoholic and a drug addict. In late 1958, while struggling to write *Last Exit to Brooklyn* (his raw, controversial first novel which was published by Grove Press in 1964), he attempted suicide—which was then a felony in the state of New York. He was locked up in Kings County Hospital in the same psych ward as the great be-bop

pianist Bud Powell.

The tragic, transcendent Powell had been institutionalized for nervous breakdowns a number of times since 1945. This was not the Bud Powell that Selby used to hear wailing and conjuring up revolutionary bop with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie at Birdland while on the 52nd Street Manhattan jazz scene in the late 40s and early 50s. This Bud Powell couldn't even talk. He'd just make funny noises. A couple of times they wheeled a piano in and Powell would start to play. Then he would stop, as if hunting for something.

Selby was absorbed in his own pain and anguish at the time, but he remembers being bewildered by the sight of the debilitated Powell. "I mean, here's this guy who was one of the great musical geniuses of the 20th century incapable of uttering a word, grinning like a man separated from himself."

"The sense of separation," Selby says

solemnly, "is the one problem in the entire universe. One answer is love, and the way you get from the problem to the answer is through forgiveness."

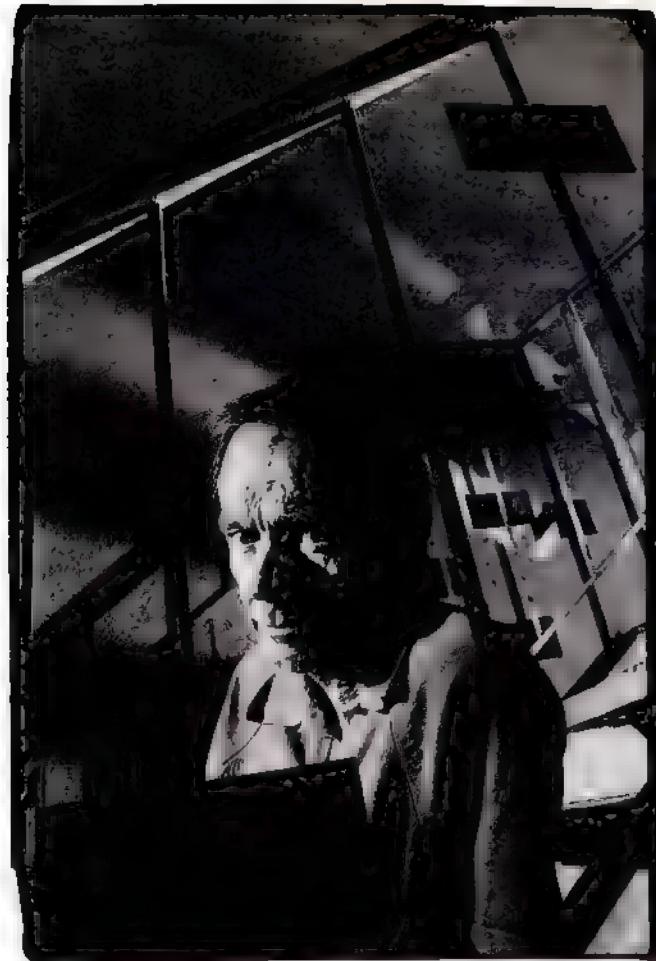
In the one-bedroom courtyard apartment where he now lives in West Hollywood, California, Selby keeps his radio tuned all day to classical music. A pair of pet cockateels jabber in a cage in the corner of the dinette. At 62, Selby is a wiry, birdlike man, five feet 10 inches tall and 115 pounds; he was six feet and 175 pounds at age 15, when he dropped out of school and went to sea

Selby is intense, friendly, almost spiritual. He still speaks in a whiny Brooklynese but laughs in manic, upper-case bursts, like one of his own characters, and goes by the incongruous nickname "Cubby," a holdover from childhood. He has been clean and sober for 21 years, since kicking a six-year heroin habit cold-turkey in solitary confine-

ment in a Los Angeles jail. Once an alienated and tortured soul, Selby says he has finally found his own forgiveness and peace of mind. He is working on his third marriage and his sixth book. Two years ago he was on welfare. Then he took a job as a clerk, which he has given up now that *Last Exit to Brooklyn* has made it to the movie screen. The film, which stars relative newcomers Jennifer Jason Leigh as trollop Traulala, Stephen Lang as drunken union creep Harry Black and Stephen Baldwin (brother of Alec) as one of the young hoods, was picked up by German filmmakers Uli Edel, Bernd Eichinger and Desmond Nakano, the same trio responsible for 1980's "Christiane F." "They have been true to the essence of the book," Selby says. "They retained that gloomy, oppressive, claustrophobic feeling, and in addition have made a great movie."

The one thing Selby still frets about is money.

"I can't get an NEA [National Endowment for the Arts] grant. I've been totally ignored by the academic community in this country for 25 years, except by a couple of my peers, other writers. That's one of the things I loved about going to



Friedrich Conrat/Onyx

Europe. They respect me over there. It's nice to be respected for your work."

"What inspires me, and what has helped me retain whatever degree of sanity I have, has been music," Selby says. "I write by ear. My only conscious major influence as a writer was Beethoven. One of my big regrets is that I never learned music. It all goes into my writing."

The sound of a wailing saxophone, in fact, comes screeching from the radio in most of the six stories that make up *Last Exit*—inflaming the hoodlums who hang out at the Greek diner before they roll "doogies" from the nearby Army base; enhancing the Benzedrine and gin orgy of Georgette the hapless "hip queer" and her/his transvestite friends, blaring barroom blues for Tralala and disrupting the strike headquarters of Harry Black.

"When somebody in the book plays with the dial until he gets a wailing sax, we're doing more than providing background music. We're telling you something about the guy and his friends and the whole atmosphere. And of course they kid the Greek about getting the hillbilly shikking music off the jukebox and give us our music, Dinah Washington, etc. Music is important to them, to fill in the silences, to keep them from thinking about themselves."

The soundtrack for the film was done by Mark Knopfler. Selby feels he did a good job transmitting those "jazz themes" that blow across the screen. "Music can be a very powerful drug, in the sense of altering our feelings, enhancing them, avoiding them—avoiding being aware of what's going on in our head. I think that's why people have to walk the streets with those little transistors: they can't stand silence, they don't want to hear what's going on inside. And life is an inside job."

"I feel a story, and then I hear it, and then I visualize it. The sounds of words are very important. What I'm trying to do is put the reader through an emotional experience; and so I have to write a certain way to bring about that effect."

Selby insists his unorthodox punctuation and typography is not bop prosody à la Jack Kerouac, but "musical notation" inspired in part by poet William Carlos Williams. Selby sees himself as a hipster visionary lying back and digging life, not a beatnik trying to glean material for novels from experience.

Last Exit, with its d.a. hairdos, street machines, sex, drugs and rumbles and rage may have inspired *The Wanderers*—a genuine rock novel by Richard Price whom Selby admires as a true street poet—and it may inform the attitude of metal and rap music, but Selby's slice of life blows strictly to be-bop.

Bob Groves

IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR?

I don't know enough about television to know how a spectacular anomaly like "The Simpsons" came about, but I do know that this winter, a show appeared on the Fox network that is the funniest TV series since Britain's "The Young Ones," the most interesting since "The Prisoner" and the most realistic since . . . well, since ever.

"Because there's been so little good writing for animation, things were wide open for us," says Matt Groening, the show's creator, speaking from Simpsons headquarters in Los Angeles. "The show talks about real problems that people have and what we try to do is make people forget that they're watching a cartoon."

The five animated Simpsons transcend their aggressive simplicity, at lines and squiggles and flat colors, to make up the most true-to-life family in television history. They're a recognizable tragedy-in progress whose occasional respites of joy come in the form of evil mischief. Affection is only for appearances, or the result of some scheme gone awry. Often, the Simpsons are overwhelmed by emotional carelessness bordering on abuse. They survive, they don't prosper; they hurt, they fail, the American dream is just a cruel taunt. And they're funny as hell.

"The Simpsons don't enjoy their insensitivities to each other," says Groening. "They are completely ruled by their impulses, and I think that's what makes them palatable: they do awful things to each other, but if they did it with the kind of glee you see on other TV shows, it

wouldn't be as funny. They struggle to be normal, except for [son] Bart, who thinks that is about as boring an ambition as you can get. They fail miserably, but that's the whole point about being normal. There's no such thing."

Bart Simpson is a rapidly emerging wind-eyed prepubescent folk hero, all skateboard punk cool, clever rebellion and catch phrases, perfect for T-shirt reproduction and Juniors High hallway emulation. But don't get too envious. While Bart may be the Squirt du Jour, the liveliest and most purely joyful character on all of television, with interesting tastes in music (it hasn't surfaced in any episode yet, but Groening says Bart listens to the Butthole Surfers, N.W.A., the Dead Milkmen—"anything that annoys his parents."), what does the future hold?

"It's hard to imagine a future for Bart," says Groening. "It would seem that with the onset of acne, his life would go into a tailspin. I wouldn't predict very happy things for Bart."

"But that's the nature of the best humor, an underlying seriousness," says Groening. "The Simpsons are definitely a dysfunctional family, but I think it's healthy to be able to laugh at them. That's part of the service we offer."

Groening offers plenty of other services. For years one of the best-loved and least cloying cartoonist/writers on the alternative circuit, Groening is also responsible for the "Life In Hell" series.

Like "The Simpsons," "Life In Hell" is a terrifyingly accurate portrayal of innocence abused, hopes shattered and cru-



Clockwise from left: Marge, Homer, Bart, Lisa and Maggie.

elies perpetrated in the name of love, lust, selfishness and self protection. It is replete with frighteningly realistic and ultra-recognizable figures disguised as freaks, clones and one-eared bunnies. As Groening says, " 'Life In Hell' is mainly about loneliness and isolation, whereas 'The Simpsons' is about love and rage. The Simpsons are in a struggle to be normal, and the characters in 'Life In Hell' are in a struggle to be hip. It depends on your audience: the audience for 'The Simpsons' is anyone with a TV; the audience for 'Life In Hell' tends to be the readers of urban alternative news weeklies and college students."

Within "Hell" Groening brings us Akbar and Jeff, a bizarre fez-clad couple who visually meld Charlie Brown and Kilroy. They began life as amusing absurdist con men, but have mutated into madly perceptive homosexual lovers ("They were either brothers or lovers or possibly both," says Groening). Akbar and Jeff are probably the Groening characters that come closest to being both happy and sated—and they make absolutely no pretense to dignity, (few characters constantly clad in fezzes could), and perhaps it's their recognizing this that leads to their happiness. Groening agrees. "I love fezzes. I wish everyone would wear one. It would be a much better world."

—Tim Sommer



"Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!"
Written and Directed by
Pedro Almodóvar

Perhaps, after a lifetime of challenging social codes, Spanish film god Pedro Almodóvar wants to go mainstream. Maybe the promise of vast international exposure in the wake of the stunning successes of "Law of Desire" and "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" was too much to resist, forcing him to abandon his trademark edge-of-the-seat unpredictability for a

more marketable, Hollywood style. Whatever it was, in his much-awaited "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" ("¡Atamé!") Almodóvar collapses in on himself like a dying star.

Ricki, played by the disquieting and very hot Antonio Banderas ("Labyrinth of Passion," "Matador," "Law of Desire," "Women on the Verge") is meant to embody the effects of life-long imprisonment. Orphaned in infancy, he moved from orphanage to reform school to psychiatric hospital. During one of many escapes from the hospital (to which he always returns voluntarily), he is picked up by beautiful B-movie actress and recovering heroin addict Marina (played by the lovely Victoria Abril), an encounter that redirects his life. Back in the hospital, a judge declares Ricki "normal" and releases him to search for the object of his obsession—Marina—with whom he dreams of building a "normal" life—steady job, marriage, children. But Ricki first has to convince Marina. So he kidnaps her and keeps her tied to the bed in her apartment. As the allegory twists onward, Marina's resistance to Ricki weakens, and she comes to accept and even cherish her imprisonment, like a bird who, once caged, is tethered by the idea of freedom.

The plot could have developed into a seething study of obsession, in the tradition of "Law of Desire," or it could have been a biting satire of the bondage of the

heterosexual dream of normalcy. But "Tie Me Up!" stays firmly earthbound.

The problems begin with the portrayal of Ricki. Clearly deranged (and, to Banderas, such parts seem to come very naturally), Ricki is meant to be motivated by his obsessive devotion to Marina, but only his psychosis comes through. His dream of normalcy, which Almodóvar seems to want us to accept as genuine, lies still-born from a flat and incongruous script.

Abril's portrayal of Marina is more believable but no less jarring. Abril, graced with solid acting skills and Rebecca De Mornay-like beauty, carries off the role handily. What she lacks, though, is the unusual charisma that has characterized all of Almodóvar's previous leading actresses. She is not, in sum, Carmen Maura, whose exclusion from this project (due, rumor has it, to a serious falling out between this Almodóvar staple and her director) reverberates from "Tie Me Up!"'s opening scene to its final frame. For Almodóvar fans, the absence of Maura's neurotic humanness leaves a screaming void Abril's best talents can't quite fill.

The on-screen chemistry of Abril and Banderas makes for an enjoyably hot love-making scene (though nothing to warrant the film's inexplicable X-rating), but that's the only electricity "Tie Me Up!" delivers. The lack of credibility in the script, the absence, except for Ban-

deras and an inconsequential bit part for Rossi De Palma (of the immense nose), of the players we Almodóvar fans have grown so attached to and the abandonment of Pedro's usual flair for the bizarre make "Tie Me Up!" wholly disappointing. Sitting through it is a two-hour eternity of waiting for an Almodóvar film to happen. There's none of the fire, none of the zaniness, none of the raw life that leap from all of his previous films. Halfway through, the promise of Pedro's usually lively sub-plots evaporates, and "Tie Me Down!" unravels toward an utterly ludicrous conclusion. Even the little plastic scuba divers (modelled on Marina's bath time sex toy), handed out to people of the press by apologetic publicists, were not enough to lighten the gloom.

Whatever possessed Almodóvar, we can only hope that it doesn't last. But the polished, cleanly-edited Hollywood scenes, the sweeping vistas à la Truffaut and the soaring score by Ennio Morricone (who also scored the marvelously enchanting "Cinema Paradiso," for which his dripping nostalgia and pathos were appropriate), all seem ill omens of an Almodóvar transformed. No longer the flamboyant and daring iconoclast, poor Pedro, it seems, has tasted the fruits of conformity, and "Tie Me Up!" is his celebration of this revelation.

—Drew Hopkins

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4	World Party	Good-bye Jumbo
5	Beats International	Let Them Eat Bingo
6	Digital Underground	Sex Packets
7	Billy Idol	Charmed Life
8	Bongwater	Too Much Sleep
9	Little Milton	The Sun Masters
10	Little Milton	Too Much Pain
11	Kid Creole & The Coconuts	Private Waters in the Great Divide
12	Marianne Faithful	Blazing Away
13	Antietam	Burgo
14	Social Distortion	Social Distortion

HEAVY ROTATION

1	Public Enemy	Fear of a Black Planet
2	Chickasaw Mudd Puppies	White Dirt
3	Lou Reed/John Cale	Songs for Drella
4	Pussy Galore	Historia de la Musica Rock
5	Jane's Addiction	Ritual de lo Habitual
6	Bad Brains	The Youth Are Getting Restless

COLLEGE RADIO TOP 20

1	.....	Sinead O'Connor	I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got
2	.....	The Church	Gold Afternoon Fix
3	.....	Midnight Oil	Blue Sky Mining
4	.....	Chills	Submarine Bells
5	.....	Depeche Mode	Violator
6	.....	The Fall	Extricate
7	.....	They Might Be Giants	Flood
8	.....	Cowboy Junkies	The Caution Horses
9	.....	Peter Murphy	Deep
10	.....	House of Love	House of Love
11	.....	Robyn Hitchcock	Eye
12	.....	Blue Aeroplanes	Swagger
13	.....	Nitzer Ebb	Showtime
14	.....	Mission U.K.	Carved In Sand
15	.....	Loop	A Gilded Eternity
16	.....	Cramps	Stay Sick!
17	.....	Social Distortion	Social Distortion
18	.....	Tachikko	Friendly As A Hand Grenade
19	.....	Poi Dog Pondering	Wishing Like A Mountain And Thinking Like The Sea
20	.....	That Petrol Emotion	Chemicalcrazy

AIDS

WORDS FROM THE FRONT

A new theory about a defective strain of HIV suggests that the virus may work like cancer. Dr. Paul Jolicoeur has already proven his point in mice experiments. He may be onto something big.

Dr. Paul Jolicoeur, sifting through papers at his laboratory in Montreal one afternoon, exudes a distinct air of confidence. Slim and soft-spoken, he is a likable man—cerebral, but not cold. He has made an extraordinary discovery, and if he can do it again, he may have found a vital missing piece in the AIDS puzzle.

Jolicoeur is taking the debate about what causes AIDS to a whole new and unexplored level, trying to get to the bottom of the mystery by examining possible mechanisms of defective strains of HIV. Although firmly rooted in the HIV camp, the 45-year-old Jolicoeur agrees with AIDS renegade Dr. Peter Duesberg to a point, saying that he "does not find much evidence" for the accepted theory of how HIV causes AIDS—namely that the virus replicates and wipes out the immune system by killing T-cells. "Peter Duesberg is right when he says there is not much HIV replication going on," he says. Just what is going on then?

According to Jolicoeur, AIDS may be the result of a cancer-like process in the body. A defective form of HIV, rather than killing cells, causes them to divide, in a cancer-like fashion, triggering the collapse of the immune system. What distinguishes this from just another theory is that Jolicoeur has already found evidence of this defective-virus phenomenon in experiments with mice, and if he can duplicate the results and apply them to HIV and human AIDS, he's got something big.

Last year, Jolicoeur and his colleagues at the institute reported in *Nature* on how they had isolated and cloned a defective version of a mouse leukemia virus. As it happened, the defective version, and not the virus in its regular form, held the potential to cause a severe immune deficiency in mice, with signs familiar to those found in human AIDS: swollen lymph glands, spleen enlargements and an excess of immunoglobulins in the blood.

This is what Jolicoeur discovered: in order to cause damage in the mice, the defective retrovirus—which lacks gene components that allow it to reproduce—needs help from a retrovirus with a regular structure. In other words, a kind of buddy system is required to cause disease, which it does within 8 to 12 weeks of infection.

SPIN: So you think that the defective-virus concept can be applied to HIV and human AIDS?

Jolicoeur: It's a strong possibility. We were pretty excited about our early data. I don't think you get an an-

imal immunodeficiency without some common pathway. In a single person you find an unbelievable mixture of HIV, but you don't know whether the virus you get out of a person is a pathogenic [disease-causing, form or not. In my mind, it's not likely to be always pathogenic because the nonpathogenic types of viruses are the most prolific. It's possible we've never seen the structure of the real pathogenic HIV.

Are you saying that there is a ray of hope for many people infected with HIV? That possibly they will never get AIDS because they don't have the pathogenic form of the virus?

Yes, if I'm right and if human retroviruses behave as those of the mouse.

"Since anti-cancer drugs are already available, they could be used to treat AIDS and possibly to prevent its development."

Do you foresee a test that will sort out who's at risk? That's one thing we're trying to do here. We're searching in patients for the pathogenic form of HIV. We'd obviously like to develop a test for it.

On April 15, 1989, Martin Haas, a virologist at the University of California at San Diego, warned in the journal *Cancer Research* that HIV studies might be on the wrong track. He wrote that the "...close association between HIV and AIDS establishes a credible correlation but not a direct causal relationship."

Haas was giving notice that some of the unexplained aspects of HIV virology and pathology could be due to a lack of knowledge of basic virology. Haas was looking in the direction of defective viruses. He was well acquainted with the Jolicoeur studies. He reasoned, for example, that if a defective version of HIV could be found, it might well account for the lack of disease in some infected people.

On December 22, 1989, the Jolicoeur team published an article in *Science* suggesting that AIDS was associated with a cancer-like process in the body.

Says Jolicoeur, "We constructed a defective mouse leukemia virus that couldn't replicate. [Editor's note: HIV replicates very little.] But replication didn't matter because we got the same result as if the virus were actually replicating. We found many more cells than were originally infected. Let's say we found a 1,000-fold higher number of cells being infected in diseased mice. The cells divided like a cancer."

So it's a cancer-like process first and then an immune deficiency appears. How?

Jolicoeur: After infection with the defective virus, the cells expand in numbers. We think that you have to build up a certain number of cells that start creating a "factor" or substance, which will be detrimental to the immune system. This may explain why some cases of AIDS take many years to develop.

So what you're also saying is that it may not be necessary for HIV to replicate in order to touch off an immune deficiency.

HIV may induce disease without the need to transform a cell.

What about cofactors? Are they necessary?

If the primary problem in AIDS is a cancer-like condition, as it appears to be in the mouse model, cofactors would play an important role in the initiation of disease. As with cancer, this will probably turn out to be a very complex process.

What are the implications of your research for treatment?

It might have enormous practical implications. The effect would be drastic, obviously, because all the drugs for AIDS are set to block HIV replication. But if the pathogenesis is the same as in the mouse then antivirals will not work because the virus may not need to replicate to be pathogenic.

What about chemotherapy?

I think that clinicians will have a tough decision to make to give such immunosuppressive drugs to already immunosuppressed patients. Since anti-cancer drugs are already available, they could be used to treat AIDS and possibly to prevent its development. I hope somebody tries. I'm suggesting it might work. If people are willing to try so many different types of drugs these days, then why not anti-cancer drugs as well?

Are you doing any work in this area?

We're looking at the effects of anti-cancer drugs in the mice. We may have some news soon.

What about AZT?

AZT doesn't work well, maybe because it's a poor anti-cancer drug, not a good one

"Cute, very cute," says Duesberg, referring to Jolicoeur's research.

What do you mean by "cute"?

Duesberg: It's a last-gasp effort to salvage the HIV hypothesis. First they tell us that the virus kills T-cells directly. Then they tell us it does so indirectly by all kinds of yet-unknown mechanisms, and now they tell us that the virus induces a process that ends with the production of some unknown toxic factor that leads to AIDS. What they are really telling us is that HIV is not sufficient to cause AIDS, and they're opening up the possibility for cofactors or alternative explanations for AIDS. You see, the virus is now a "pussycat," it's no longer the big killer. It needs a pathogenic friend now. And maybe more friends.

Do you have any specific criticism of the Jolicoeur work?

The virus complex that he produces in the lab is not likely to survive in nature. It depends on experimental transmission of the virus at high levels and on maintaining a high ratio of defective-to-helper virus.

Do you mean that this is really a laboratory artifact?

Yes, because natural virus transmission outside the lab is almost always based on low multiplicity of infection. In order to be pathogenic in humans, a defective form of HIV would have to be present in all HIV stocks at nearly the same concentration as regular HIV, because AIDS pathogenicity would then depend on double infection.

So your conclusion is....

This is the turning point.

To this Jolicoeur responds, "I think people are very interested in this. The concept is novel. It gives new perspective to the disease. The data will soon be published. We'll see what Peter says then."

—Nicholas Regush

AZT in Asymptomatics—More Conflicting Data

Last August, the NIH (National Institutes of Health) announced that AZT had been found effective not just in treating AIDS but also in preventing it. They pointed to a massive two-year study "proving" that when AZT was given to people who had (or had antibodies to) HIV but had not yet developed AIDS, it slowed the onslaught of the disease "significantly." In spite of the fact that the study referred to had not been finished or published at the time, it was established that anyone with a T-cell count below 500 should take AZT as a preventive measure against AIDS. (That means approximately 650,000 people in the US.) The press, reading not the study, but a two-page press release, trumpeted the

news that "HIV-positive patients are twice as likely to get AIDS if they don't take AZT."

AZT is a highly toxic form of chemotherapy that causes, among other things, bone marrow toxicity, which essentially means the obliteration of the immune system (see "Sins of Omission," SPIN, November 1989). Its benefits against AIDS are slight and there is little reason to imagine that it could benefit a healthy person even with HIV antibodies, given that it does suppress the immune system by directly killing T-4 and other cells, and does not have a significant effect on any of the major AIDS-related diseases. Furthermore, its effect on HIV replication has proven to be temporary.

This April, a full nine months after this odd and irresponsible announcement was made to the public, the results of the study were finally published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (April 5). The study, which compared daily doses of 500 mg, 1500 mg and

said analysis at two years demonstrated "no statistical difference in progression to AIDS," and that deaths in both placebo and AZT groups were "virtually identical." The article concluded that "thoughtful, intelligent and ethical physicians" may want to let stable patients with T-cell counts closer to 500, a standardized threshold for failing immunity, "choose not to take the drug."

Food for thought. And by the way, the logic here seems downright ludicrous. Consider this: you have three groups of people, none of whom have headaches, and you give two of the three aspirin, but not the third. Headaches are eventually reported in all groups. In those who got the aspirin, and still got a headache, you say they would have gotten it sooner had they not taken the aspirin. And in those who got a headache and did not get the aspirin, you assume they would not have gotten the headache so soon had they taken the aspirin. How could you possibly make these projections about a disease that has a latency period that has now been stretched possibly to a lifetime? Do they seriously mean that people should take chemotherapy, possibly for life, in the event that they are in the minority of HIV-positive people who progress to AIDS?

If I were an AIDS activist, I'd put that question on my sign and scream my lungs dry.

The poster at left is being pasted all over New York City by AIDS activists.

Acting Up Against AZT

And speaking of AIDS activists, ACT UP New York has launched a most curious campaign, plastering the city with bright red posters, modeled after the Coca-Cola logo, that tell us to "Enjoy AZT." Small type at the bottom of the flyer reports: "The US government has spent 1 billion dollars over the past 10 years to research new AIDS drugs. The result: 1 drug—AZT. It makes half the people who try it sick and for the other half it stops working after a year. Is AZT the last, best hope for people with AIDS, or is it a short-cut to the killing Burroughs Wellcome is making in the AIDS marketplace? Scores of drugs languish in government pipelines, while fortunes are made on this monopoly."

The flyer asks—"Is This Health Care Or Wealth Care?" My question is: is this the same ACT UP that "denounced" SPIN for saying precisely that about AZT

in our November 1989 issue?

When, in "Sins of Omission," we chronicled the shabby science behind AZT and how it has monopolized AIDS science, SPIN was attacked by a flurry of ACT UP members, huffing that we were "grossly irresponsible" for "scaring people away from AZT," mysteriously dubbed "the only drug that can prolong life." Peter Staley from ACT UP told MTV News that he "denounced" the article. Since when do members of "democratic-to-a-fault" activist organizations denounce periodicals for dispensing information? Another ACT UP'er, Mark Kostopolous of LA, said on a radio program that the article was "full of inaccuracies." When asked if he could be more specific, he quoted our assertion that "50 percent of all AIDS pa-

a placebo, concluded that the rates of progression to AIDS were slowest with low dose AZT and highest with the placebo.

The official dosage was cut in half. AIDS journals trumpeted the news and the AZT mythology swelled. Health authorities put up posters on bus shelters begging people to get tested because early intervention could "add years" to your life.

However, in labs on the West Coast and in Europe, scientists were reaching quite different conclusions. Investigators at the Veterans Administration (VA) and in Europe had also administered AZT in asymptomatic patients over a period of two years and in the March 23 issue of *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)* it was reported that they had "not seen benefit in such patients. . . ."

John D. Hamilton, MD, cochair of the VA study,

Continued on page 93

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ANTI HERO

What happens when network news is owned and sponsored by big corporations that need to protect their own interests?

Column by Martin A. Lee
and Norman Solomon

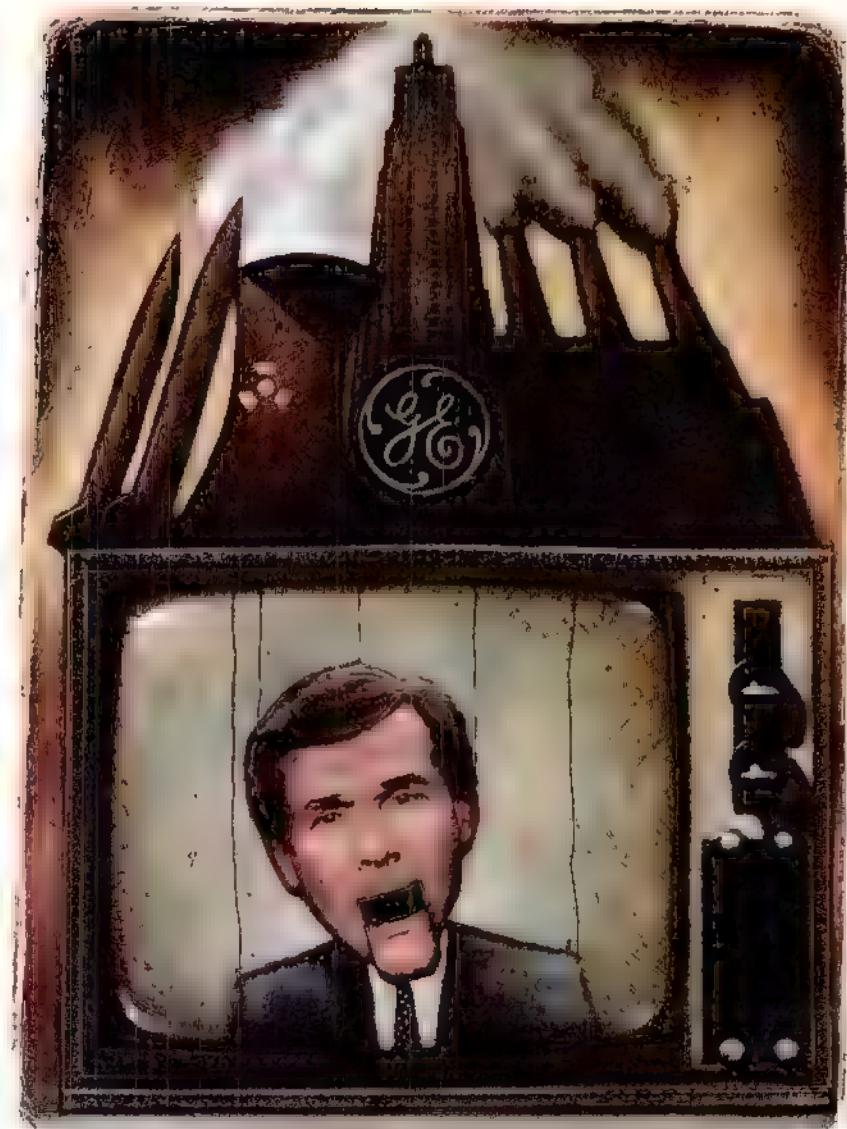
Executives at NBC's "Today Show" found themselves in an awkward position. An NBC News correspondent had composed a hard-hitting report on corrupt practices by some of America's top industrial firms that put millions of people at risk and endangered communities throughout the country. The story, which had already aired on a local NBC affiliate in Chicago, focused on the widespread use of faulty bolts to build airplanes, bridges, nuclear missile silos and equipment for the NASA space program. General Electric, the parent company of NBC, had used the bolts on some of their projects.

The "Today Show" broadcast the segment on November 30, 1989, but an important detail was missing—GE's role in the scandal. A reference to NBC's corporate owner had been surgically removed from the report. The censored portion included this passage: "Recently, General Electric engineers discovered they had a big problem. One out of three bolts from one of their major suppliers was bad. Even more alarming, GE accepted the bad bolts without any certification of compliance for eight years."

Peter Karl, the Chicago-based journalist who produced the segment, was furious when he saw what the "Today Show" did to his story. He called the decision to eliminate references to GE "insidious," citing the "chilling effect" on a network that is "overprotective of a corporate owner."

Ask an NBC executive and he or she will solemnly swear that GE never interferes with network broadcasts. That's not surprising—since big media executives are well-served by the myth of a free and independent press. Far more surprising is that the story about GE and the faulty bolts got as far as it did.

GE, a financial and industrial behemoth with annual sales topping \$50 billion, has a keen interest in how the daily news is spun, especially news on national security and related issues. A major player in the mili-



tary-industrial complex, GE makes the detonators for every nuclear bomb in America's arsenal. There are few modern weapons systems that GE has not been instrumental in developing. GE also manufactures refrigerators, medical equipment, plastics, light bulbs and communications satellites. When GE acquired RCA, NBC's parent company, in 1986 for \$6.28 billion, it added a formidable media component to its worldwide business empire.

GE's ownership of NBC underscores a dilemma that calls into question the integrity of corporate journalism: the same companies that report the news are often deeply involved in shaping events before they become news. But our mass media don't readily acknowledge this.

In March 1987, for example, NBC News broadcast

a special documentary, "Nuclear Power: In France It Works," which could have passed for an hour long nuclear power commercial. In an upbeat introduction, NBC anchor Tom Brokaw neglected to state that his corporate patron is America's second largest nuclear energy vendor, with 39 nuclear power reactors in the United States, and the third-leading nuclear weapons producer—facts which gave birth to the nickname "Nuclear Broadcasting Company" among disgruntled NBC staff.

Herein lay a fundamental conflict of interest, which Brokaw didn't own up to. Citizens' fear of nuclear technology could cut into GE's profits—and these fears were a key target of this so-called "News Special." An NBC crew toured France as if on a pilgrimage to the atomic land of Oz, off to see the wizardry of

safe nuclear power plants. "Looking at a foreign country where nuclear power is a fact of life may restore some reason to the discussion at home," said correspondent Steve Delaney. "In most countries, especially the US, emotions drive the nuclear debate and that makes rational dialogue very difficult."

Having sung the praises of the French nuclear industry, NBC News bluffed when discussing what to do with radioactive waste, some of which remains lethal for dozens of centuries or longer. "The French will probably succeed in their disposal plan for the same reasons the rest of their nuclear program works. . . . The French have more faith than we do in the government's competence to manage the nuclear program, and the French government has less tolerance for endless dissent."

Unfortunately, faith and lack of tolerance for dissent will not solve critical nuclear problems, even in France. One month after NBC aired its pro-nuclear broadcast, there were accidents at two French nuclear power installations, injuring seven workers. The *Christian Science Monitor* wrote of a "potentially explosive debate" in France, with polls showing a third of the French public opposing nuclear power. While the accidents were widely discussed in the French media and some US newspapers, NBC did not report the story.

Not long after NBC aired its puff piece on French atomic power plants, a member of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) resigned, charging that GE had "struck a deal" with the NRC to keep secret the contents of an internal GE report about its faulty nuclear reactor design. The report, written in 1975, detailed intense management pressure on GE's nuclear division to rush onto the market an inadequately tested and potentially dangerous nuclear reactor design. Earthquake hazards and radiation

exposure for plant workers were among the problems documented in the suppressed GE memo.

GE officials were aware that the company's reactors were faulty since the late 1950s, but this did not deter them from building and selling unsafe systems and covering up their lethal flaws. When "insurmountable" problems were discovered in GE's Zimmer plant near Cincinnati, Ohio, three utilities sued GE charging that it knowingly sold faulty nuclear power plants. In November, 1987, GE agreed to pay \$78.3 million in an out-of-court settlement. Utilities in three other states have also sued GE for installing unsafe nuclear systems.

The "Today Show" removed unfavorable references to NBC's corporate owner, General Electric, from its story.

This was not the first time GE faced charges because of reckless and corrupt behavior. During World War II, GE was convicted of illegally collaborating with Germany's Krupp company, a linchpin of the Nazi war machine.

In 1961, GE was found guilty of price-fixing, bid-rigging and antitrust violations. In addition to paying a large fine, three GE officials served brief jail terms. But GE's attorney Clark Clifford (chair of the CIA's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and a future Defense Secretary) convinced the Internal Revenue Service that the damages GE had to pay for its illegal activities could be written off as a tax-deductible business expense!

In 1981, GE was found guilty of bribing a Puerto Rican official to obtain a \$92 million contract to build a power plant on the island. GE paid no income tax that year, even though its pretax earnings were \$2.66 billion; what's more, GE somehow qualified for a \$90 million rebate from the IRS. In 1985, GE pleaded guilty to the charge of defrauding the US government by overcharging on military contracts. The following year, GE gobbled up NBC.

It wasn't always so easy to pull off this kind of media acquisition. ITT's attempt to purchase ABC in 1966 provoked a public outcry. The plan was nixed after the Justice Department found that ITT control "could compromise the independence of ABC's news coverage of political events in countries where ITT has interests." The same logic could have been applied to GE, which operates in over 50 foreign countries, but its purchase of NBC 20 years later was hardly talked about in Washington or the American press.

GE's well-documented record of crimes should have been grounds for the Justice Department to prohibit GE from buying a major television network. But GE had friends in high places and the deal went through without a hitch. The fact that Ronald Reagan had previously spent eight years on GE's payroll as the company's chief PR spokesman undoubtedly helped matters.

GE and other military contractors made out like bandits during the Reagan administration, which presided over the largest peacetime military build-up in US history. And bandits are exactly what they are, as the Pentagon procurement scandal, involving dozens of military contractors, amply demonstrates. In November 1988, GE was pegged with a 321-count indictment for trying to defraud the Department of Defense. NBC Nightly News gave a straightforward report about the indictment—that lasted around ten seconds. There was little follow-up on this scandal by any of the major networks. The corporate *zeitgeist* doesn't encourage a sustained, in-depth investigation of such matters.

Star Wars research was a veritable cash cow for GE and other high-tech weapons manufacturers. But the Star Wars program—and, by implication, lucrative GE contracts—could be scuttled if policy changes resulted in a major arms control agreement. Star Wars became an issue during the 1988 presidential campaign: Bush was for it and Dukakis was against it. Thus NBC's owner had a material interest in the outcome of the election. GE chief executive John Welsh donated money to the Bush campaign. So did NBC president Robert Wright. NBC News employees didn't have to be told that a Dukakis victory—or tough, critical reporting on Star Wars—could cost GE hundreds of millions of dollars in Defense Department contracts.

Not surprisingly, NBC correspondents haven't shown much zeal for investigating crimes committed by GE. In 1986, New York State officials banned recreational and commercial bass fishing after GE had polluted the Hudson River with 400,000 pounds of carcinogenic PCBs. According to the EPA's 1985 Superfund list, GE was responsible for 22 toxic waste sites around the country—the most of any firm cited. Instead of atoning for its ecological sins, GE continued to poison the natural environment. By 1989, the number of Superfund sites involving GE had risen to 47 and this figure did not include radioactive pollution at three GE run nuclear weapons facilities. By the US government's own admission, GE is among the most avaricious polluters in the country.

Nor has NBC done much digging into Kidder Peabody, GE's brokerage subsidiary, which coughed up a \$25 million fine for assisting Ivan Boesky's insider trading schemes on Wall Street. And the

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worldwide consumer boycott of GE products launched by INFAT, a Boston-based public interest organization opposed to nuclear profiteering, hasn't been a hot topic on NBC News either. And INFAT's TV commercials, urging consumers not to buy GE products, were banned by NBC and other networks.

It would be an overstatement to say that the topic of GE's ownership is banned from NBC broadcasts. Occasionally, David Letterman will make a few joking references to GE on his late-night talk show. In that context, a bit of lampooning about corporate daddy is permissible. At first glance a concession to openness and self-criticism, such quips may be just the reverse—a kind of inoculation, making light of vested interests and ethical quagmires.

GE and its corporate brethren (including other media owners) have a vast stake in decisions made by the US government. Through elite policy-shaping groups like the Council on Foreign Relations and the Business Roundtable, they guide the ship of state in what they deem to be an advantageous direction. They have much to gain from a favorable investment climate in foreign countries and bloated military budgets at home.

This was made explicit by former GE president Charles Wilson, a longtime advocate of a permanent war economy, who worked with the Pentagon's Office of Defense Mobilization during the 1950s. In a speech before the American Newspaper Publishers Association, he urged the media to rally behind the government's Cold War crusade. "The free world is in mortal danger. If the people were not convinced of that, it would be impossible for Congress to vote vast sums now being spent to avert that danger," said Wilson. "With the support of public opinion, as marshaled by the press, we are off to a good start. It is our job—yours and mine—to keep our people convinced that the only way to keep disaster away from our shores is to build America's might."

Nowadays, General Electric doesn't need to marshal the press to persuade the masses; it owns a sizable chunk of it. In addition to the nation's most profitable television network, GE's media portfolio includes a new cable channel, CNBC. And GE also sponsors news programs on other networks, such as ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley," CNN's "Crossfire" and the "McLaughlin Group" on PBS.

In an era of network news cutbacks and staff layoffs, many reporters are reluctant to pursue stories they know will upset management. Even more insidious than brazen intrusion into the editorial process by media owners are the inevitable compromises that journalists make as they adjust to the constraints of the corporate workplace. "People are more careful now," remarked a former NBC News producer, "because this whole notion of freedom of the press becomes a contradiction when the people who own the media are the same people who need to be reported on. There are political limits I perceive, and you have to work within those limits, because ultimately it's unacceptable to stray beyond them."

Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon are associated with the media watch group FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting). This article is adapted from their book, *Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media* (Lyle Stuart, July 1990).

JOHN HIATT STOLEN MOMENTS



"HIS SONGS ARE LIFELINES"

TIME Magazine

"Hiatt has long been considered by pop aficionados one of rock's foremost songwriters." —New York Times Magazine

For the last decade, John Hiatt has been releasing some of the most focused and captivating music around. He's also authored material for artists including Bob Dylan, Iggy Pop, The Neville Brothers and Rosanne Cash. Most recently, he's penned the smash singles "Thing Called Love" for Bonnie Raitt and "Angel Eyes" for Jeff Healey.

STOLEN MOMENTS, Hiatt's new album, is filled with the memorable stories and wry observations that have become his trademark. It's a passage through a landscape of sights and sounds worth sharing and an arrival at a welcome destination.

STOLEN MOMENTS, featuring "Child Of The Wild Blue Yonder," "The Rest Of The Dream," "Through Your Hands," and "Real Fine Love."

It's time well spent.

Stolen Moments. The new album by John Hiatt.

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SPINNS



Eric Brown



Edited by
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Various Artists
Glasnost
MCA

Judging Soviet rock music fairly, in light of our own preconceptions and

expectations, is tough. Take Boris Grebenshikov's US-directed English album *Radio Silence*, which disappointed many here because it didn't sound appreciably different from American rock—no balalaikas, no Marxist martial gusto, just a deep-thinking poet singing with deep feeling.

Now comes *Glasnost*, a remarkably varied compilation of pure late 80s Soviet pop for Soviet people—both US/UK derivative and USSR-distinctive. To compare my impressions with those of a Soviet, I went to the New York bureau of the Tass news agency and listened to *Glasnost* with Vladimir Mostovets, a correspondent who frequently writes about Western rock.

"Maybe it's not good compared with

American rock, because American rock has reached a stage Soviet rock is only moving to," said Mostovets, referring specifically to the lead track, "Mirage," by hard rock band Cruise. "They're standard, but they're playing very well—in my opinion," he continued.

"Mirage"'s brisk-paced, melodic hard rock guitar (with a keyboard-underpinned chorus) is indeed as good as can be, considering. As for the other *Glasnost* hard rockers, both EVM, whose blues-based anti-war "Honest John" (the name of a US nuke) sounds completely American, and Autograph, one of the first Soviet bands to tour the West, prove no worse (or better) than a million other bands on either side of the curtain.

Other *Glasnost* artists are more interesting. Alla Pugachova, a veteran Soviet superstar said to have sold over 100 million records, has the powerhouse pipes of an opera star—or a drill sergeant.

"I'm sure she's acting as if she's on a stage," said Mostovets after listening to "The Race." Indeed, Pugachova's declamatory theatricality snaps you to attention. Her synth-driven "Find Me" is a "good, danceable song for the pop charts," unbridled in energy but lacking in nuance.

Less overtly pop but also featuring a knockout female vocalist (Zhanna Aguzarova) is the jazzy R&B group Bravo, whose "I Do Believe" is described by Mostovets as "some kind of Russian blues" and is marked by a reggae beat.



Solo artist extraordinaire or sideman to the stars? These days

Adrian Belew is both. His brand new album, *Young Lions*, has already been hailed as the most accomplished of his career. And you can also catch Adrian as David Bowie's featured guitarist on their current world tour.

The album includes "Pretty Pink Rose," a duet with David Bowie.



Also available: the CD-5 Maxi Single with "Pretty Pink Rose," "Oh Daddy" and two brand new, never-before-released tracks.



On Atlantic Records, Cassettes and Compact Discs
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and great sax parts which second the vocal leads

Next up is female vocal star Sofia Rotaru, whose seductively breathy, Blondie-like "Small Incident" (a bird slain by hunters) has "a Moldavian smell—not in a rude sense—a Moldavian folk influence." The band Creators also imparts a pronounced folk flavor to its contemplative "Winter," with icy synth textures creating an appropriately cold listening climate.

One of the two most intriguing tracks on *Glasnost* is "Music Under the Snow," by the venerable Time Machine. "It's one of our oldest rock groups. They were underground for about 10 years. They became popular because of their attention to lyrics, like The Doors, or 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'-era Beatles."

Thanks to a sparing arrangement of whispery voices and glistening guitar and keyboard, "Music Under the Snow" sounds exactly like that. Similarly, "White Night," by Forum, sounds like the white night of vocalist Victor Saltykov's romantic dream.

"This one reflects a more purely Russian pop style," said Mostovets. "It has elements of Russian folk music from the past, which remain strong today—even in rock'n'roll." "White Night" effectively evokes an air of melancholy, once you accept Saltykov's disembodied, ultra-serious high-pitched whine. It's the one song on the record that I return to over and over.

Glasnost is truly rewarding as a whole, both musically and as further evidence of the similarities between our long-antagonistic societies. "I can only hope this is not the last album of Soviet rock in America," Mostovets concluded

Jim Bessman



Public Enemy
Fear of a Black Planet
 Columbia

Public Enemy's new album, *Fear of a Black Planet*, went gold before it even hit the stores. You already know

what it sounds like, but what does it mean? Will "Fight the Power" become the anthem to a revolution, or a jingle to sell fabric softener? To get some perspective on PE's radicalism, SPIN talked with Cornel West, director of Princeton University's Afro-American Studies program

Do you think of PE as political activists, concerned artists or commercial entertainers? They're all three; they're resurrecting the past. They want their music to be heard, they want to be commercially successful.

How about the lyrics? They mean different things to different constituencies. Middle-class white youth in Iowa and Scarsdale hear something different than what they hear in Watts or Black Bottom. PE is polyvalent enough to appeal in a variety of different ways. A significant number of white youth don't listen that closely to the lyrics. They may appreciate the sheer linguistic virtuosity, but they don't hear the same message. PE's success speaks to the Afro-Americanization of white youth, from PE, Michael Jordan and Prince to Michael Jackson and Eddie Murphy. They are cultural icons, with powerful summoning powers to draw whites into black idioms and cultural styles.

Do you think, then, that the politics can be separated from the music? Culturally, no. They're helping to achieve the humanity of black people.

Politically, though ... It's a cultural movement. PE doesn't translate into politics. America doesn't have a credible organization or spokesperson to lead a movement for equality. The cultural genre of rap doesn't have the impact on the distribution of power that a political movement would. There is other protest music, from Tracy Chapman, Pete Seeger and Peter, Paul & Mary to Sweet Honey in the Rock. Rap is a distinct cultural form, but still far removed from a political statement. American political culture has a limited spectrum. Rap is exciting, in the number of cultural forms, militant expressions, the radicalism, the indication of something brewing—but it's still a jump to political translation. The Jackson campaign is not the answer. Besides being too myopic, it's too depressing to look at the national level. Look locally. LA has a progressive coalition populated with highly articulate black women.

What are emerging as the important issues? Housing ... No, the powerful issues are feminist and labor. This is a dis-analogy to rap music, which is still male hegemonic. Although I am impressed with Chuck D's attempt to make a tribute to women ("Revolutionary Generation"). Despite labor's con-

tractions, there is a black and brown insurgency. While the labor and women's movements are the most progressive, ironically, the black nationalists hold these issues at bay. Self-love, self-affirmation is good, but Farrakhan's preoccupation with what he perceives as Jewish power is regrettable.

Is rap music creating a cultural space for a popular political movement to fill?
Certainly not yet. It might, it's too early to tell. Though I do love PE's spirit of resistance, that fusion of talent and energy I may not always agree with how it is articulated, but it's so much better than all those sentimental adolescent love songs.

—Nathaniel Wice

Robert Plant
Manic Nirvana
Es Paranza

Like so many of his fellow 70s prog-rockers (Yes, Rush, Peter Gabriel, Queen, Jethro Tull, King Crimson), Robert Plant spent the 80s trying hard to keep up to date with a decade that had left progressivism as he knew it behind. Which, at least in England (where most of these guys come from), meant coming to terms with the immaculate but eclectic trance/dance orientation of post-punk/post-disco art-school pop. Though the lemon king never managed to come up with an instant hookpile on the order

of "Owner Of A Lonely Heart" or "Another One Bites The Dust," it's fair to say that on the whole he fared smarter than any of his contemporaries. His first two solo LPs took into account Sergio Leone soundtracks and OPEC desert heat, and



by his third he was working on Africa Bambaataa. It wasn't 'til Led Zep turned hip again and Bob's fashion sense com-mixed with nostalgia on 1988's *Now And Zen* that he started to get annoying.

As if any of us took Whitesnake seriously in the first place. Unfortunately, *Now And Zen* outsold everything previous, so we're right to expect more of the same, and that's exactly what *Manic Nirvana* gives us. Once again (I ex "Heaven Knows" and "Ship Of Fools" last time), the nirvana feels healthier than the mania. When Bob goes into the mystic he reminds me why he used to be such a sage, but when he starts roaring about how "she loves to go down" and

he wants to kiss her flower, it's embarrassing. He's 42, his musicians look like his kids, and when he says acoustic songs are "crucial for our growing as a band," he sounds like their little-league coach. So he could at least show a little dignity, y'know? In ethereal epics like "I Cried" and the Arabesque "Watching You," he does. Just wish somebody'd explain to him that the Stray Cats are passé.

Instead of planting technobilly *Joshua Trees*, Plant should be picking up where Zep left off. "Fool In The Rain" suggested a salsa-metal merger nobody save Teena Marie has attempted since. Loud guitars and timbales—it's the future, I swear.

Chuck Eddy

World Party
Goodbye Jumbo
Chrysalis

"**W**on't you show me something true today?" shouts Karl Wallinger, early into *Goodbye Jumbo*. Although his manner is sunny, the boy's not kidding: the second World Party album finds little pleasure in modern life, prescribing love and other old-fashioned notions to remedy contemporary ills. Lest anyone miss his 60s roots, Wallinger loads this winning opus with enough references to make his affinities perfectly clear.



Karl Wallinger of *World Party*

Of course, after Tom Petty, Lenny Kravitz and other retro dudes, recycling the past doesn't seem innovative. Wallinger's fervor in appropriating the classics may be unmatched, though. The rollicking "Way Down Now" combines the attitude of "Satisfaction" with perfect "woo woo's" from "Sympathy for the Devil." (Who needs sampling?) Meanwhile, "When the Rainbow Comes" boasts weepy George Harrison-style guitar and the lyrics to "Please Mr Postman." And "God on My Side" mixes "Let It Be" with the Beach Boys, etc.

These witty quotes would be sterile exercises if Wallinger wasn't having so much fun. His unabashed enthusiasm, along with the ability to craft killer pop tunes, are symptoms of a fel a who loves his work. Wallinger clearly enjoys mimicking great singers, too, his flexible voice conjures up images of everyone

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The Spin Reviews

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2. Public Enemy *Fear of a Black Planet*
3. Robert Plant *Manic Nirvana*
4. World Party *Good-bye Jumbo*
5. Billy Idol *Charmed Life*
6. Bongwater *Too Much Sleep*
7. Kid Creole & the Coconuts *Private Waters...Gr Divide*
8. Marianne Faithful *Blazing Away*
9. Antebatam *Burgoo*
10. Social Distortion *Social Distortion*

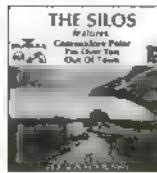
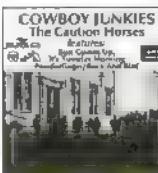
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Richard Barone (of the Borgos)
Primal Dream
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Happiness
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Kings of the Sun
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Love Club
It's Annoying
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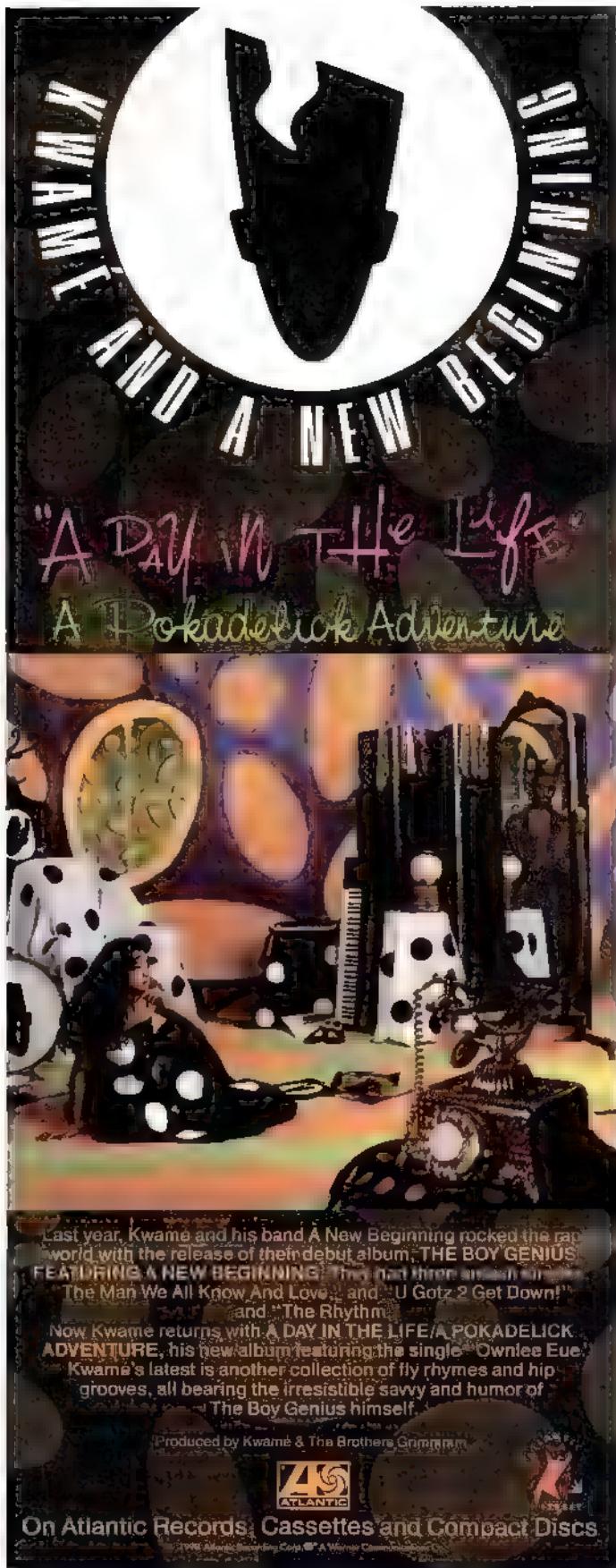
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Last year, Kwame and his band A New Beginning rocked the rap world with the release of their debut album, **THE BOY GENIUS FEATURING A NEW BEGINNING**. He had three and a half million copies of "The Man We All Know And Love" and "U Gots 2 Get Down" and "The Rhythmu" and "The Rhythmu".

Now Kwame returns with **A DAY IN THE LIFE/A POKADELICK ADVENTURE**, his new album featuring the single "Ownlee Eve".

Kwame's latest is another collection of fly rhymes and hip grooves, all bearing the irresistible savvy and humor of The Boy Genius himself.

Produced by Kwame & The Brothers Grimm



On Atlantic Records. Cassettes and Compact Discs.

from electric Dylan ("Take It Up") to Sly Stone via Prince ("Show Me to the Top").

But joyous noise can't disguise a glum outlook. *Goodbye Jumbo* suggests ecological disaster in the bluesy "Is It Too Late?" portrays a lover's tragedy in "And I Fell Back Alone," reviews the Rushdie affair with "God on My Side" and generally depicts Wallinger as a worried man. At least he ends on an upbeat note with "Thank You World," a spacey ode to Mother Earth punctuated by growling psychedelic guitar.

The voracious devouring of styles recalls Todd Rundgren, who raised eclecticism to a fine art before his ego spun out of control (in fact, the Todd-like ballad "Love Street" is the limpest cut.) Wonderful though it is, *Goodbye Jumbo* may well contain the seeds of similar artistic ruin. But even if Karl Wallinger hits the skids of self-indulgence tomorrow, he's already given us a groovy keepsake.

—Jon Young



Beats International

Let Them Eat Bingo
Elektra

In pop music, rhythm and irony are both drugs: ever-larger doses are required to get high. In 1984, Malcolm McLaren got other people to figure out how to combine hip-hop with opera, added a somewhat lazy comment on celebrity, and took the credit. Even shorter attention spans will appreciate Beats International's *Let Them Eat Bingo*.

Appealing conceptual art always arrives with a degree of alienated majesty, when you kick yourself and wonder "Why didn't I think of that?" The thing that will drive you crazy here, though, is trying to unravel all the samples taken from your record collection, buried in the World Beat sound. And it will bother you, because the oh-so-clever dance music is rich and varied enough to yield many listens, even straight through on auto-reverse or replay.

Each track gets going with familiar samples, then heads off everywhere and anywhere. "Won't Talk About It" starts with a Billy Bragg guitar riff sawing back and forth, and then rolls smoothly through disco, rap, synth-pop and more rock guitar sections. On "Dub Be Good To Me," which went to the top of the British charts before the US release of the album, the sampled bass line from The Clash's "The Guns of Brixton" is juxtaposed with a completely apolitical

Motown message. Familiar reggae and Latin rhythms abound, and the album ends with the final crash from "A Day In The Life."

Purists of any of the dozen or so manipulated genres may find Beats International's variety too snide or facile to tolerate, or maybe you've finally had enough irony. Everything is imitation, from rap, house and funk to blues, gospel, reggae and rock'n'roll: nothing means anything. The jungle meets the street, but neither is authentic. There's no overall style here, but that can be a comment on the mess, too. An old commercial declares between two tracks, "The finest ingredients are right in the mix," but how long until the samplers are sampled?

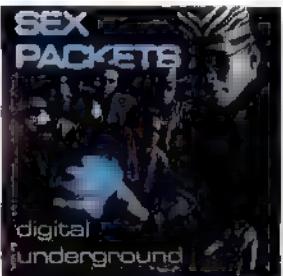
—Nathaniel Wice

Digital Underground

Sex Packets
Tommy Boy

Critics have erroneously linked Berkeley-based Digital Underground with De La Soul and A Tribe Called Quest, but the only thing DU have in common with these acts is that none of them sound like Big Daddy Kane. Less a rap act than a hip-hopized Parliament/Funkadelic replete with crazy characters and funky costumes, funk-heavy grooves with bottomless bass lines, graffiti-toon sleeve artwork and overblown concept albums—Digital Underground are stowaways on the Mothership Connection.

On the outer space tip, *Sex Packets* concerns a fictitious drug, allegedly designed by NASA scientists to relieve the



pent-up frustrations of astronauts in space. The album is a tour of dark locales, whether underground, underwater or under covers.

Despite these moody settings the spirit of *Sex Packets* is overwhelmingly playful. Humpty Hump, alter ego of group leader Shock G, is the comical creator of "The Humpty Dance." Possessed of a rather large nose and a geeky game show host voice, Humpty definitely commands attention.

"Doowutchyalike" is a buoyant anthem for free-thinking party people everywhere. "Freaks Of The Industry" features a craftily employed sample of Donna Summer's "Love To Love You Baby." "Rhymin' On The Funk" samples Parliament's "Flashlight." These

songs are nothing short of euphoric, and all owe a heavy debt to George Clinton's genius.

The last five cuts comprise a cohesive Sex Packet suite, which is intended as the centerpiece of the album. A fantasy/social commentary in the Parliament tradition, "sex packets" reflect the concerns of a generation coping with the sexual frustration that has resulted in large part from the presence of AIDS. "No more will I ever have to jack it, / 'Cause instead, I can just take a packet." Sex Packets is the truest synthesis yet of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll.

—Lance Gould

Billy Idol Charmed Life Chrysalis

As usual, there's lots of sex and sweat on Billy Idol's latest, *Charmed Life*. But that's not all—there's death, Beggars Banquet, track marks, co-d turkey, a beach, some bank robbing, cops in cars, topless bars and faith in love as redemption. The real-life Billy Idol (there has to be one, right?) sounds like he's bouncing back after hard times. There's a song called "Trouble with the Sweet Stuff," and I don't think it's about Billy's struggle to control his Clarol Styling Gel habit. But the most impressive aspect of

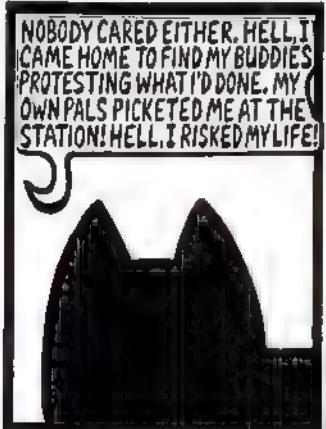
Charmed Life is that it's Billy's first real solo show. There's no real collaborator with the input of Tony James or the brilliant Steve Stevens, but despite some ace songwriting help from Mark Younger-Smith, Keith Forsey and others, the show-stealers are the ones that Billy pumps over by himself. The smoky slow tracks, like "Mark of Caine" (ahem) and "Prodigal Blues," are a totally new sound, acoustic synth-scrubbed Tunnel of Love-style confessionalists that give Billy a chance to stretch his singing into deliberate, nervous chanting without blues mannerisms. "Love Unchained" chops a parade of bludgeoning hooks into miniature surges of energy, never boiling



over, but keeping you fascinated until it fades out.

Billy locates his powers squarely in rock tradition, with lyrical waves to everyone from Robert Johnson and Jerry

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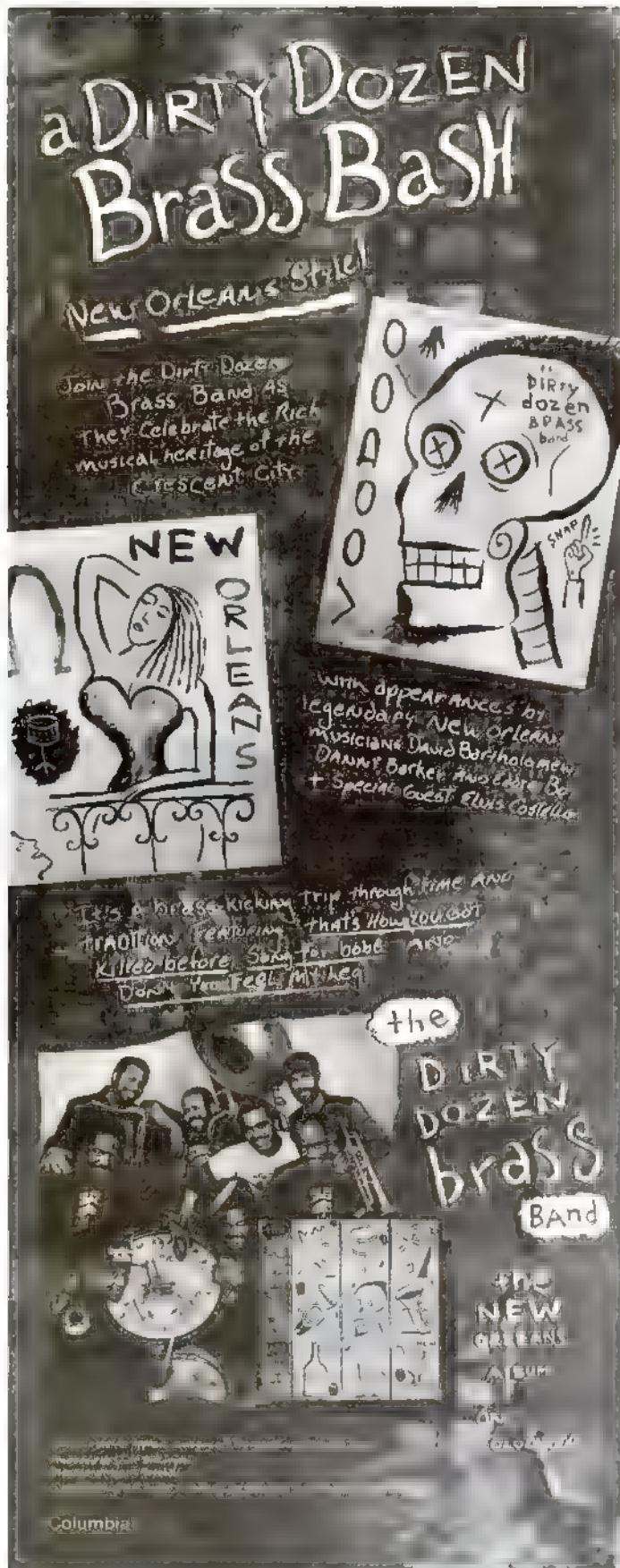


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Lee Lewis to punk peers like The Clash and Poly Styrene. His version of "Endless Sleep" has him rescuing his baby from the sea of death instead of diving in with her, and his wonderful "LA Woman" gives the bloated beast some succinct muscle. Billy leaves the dumb coke-koan "Mr. Mojo Risin'" out, and instead bellows "Drinking Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee." Years of loving and admiring Billy Idol have taught me that nobody really loves his fans more than Billy, and brags about it less. Like *Rebel Yell* and the underrated *Whiplash Smile*, *Charmed Life* has a moral disguised as a smutty joke buried in the music, something like "Blue Highway"'s post-decadent coda, "So glad that you're livin' now / I'm glad that you wanna stay / Because! Because why, Billy? Because well, spo-dee-o-dee

—Robert Sheffield

Although he can layer voices, effects and distorted guitars denser than spinach pie, Kramer's aural maximalist antecedents lie in the late-60s studio action painting of the Beatles, Frank Zappa, and *After Bathing at Baxters*-era Jefferson Airplane. Almost as much happens between the tunes as within them. Drowsers snore, telephones jingle, answering machines click on ("my message is unimportant"), and portentous voices utter self-realizing non sequiturs ("the key is now"). A drum machine suffering Tourette's Syndrome has replaced David Licht, unfortunately, but Dave Rick still manufactures Bongwater's unlikely power-tool leads.

Bongwater's generous excess—whether of highly unusual sonic information or abstract emotion—is its own reward. The record, incidentally, contains 13 songs, the CD, 17 and the cassette, 13 plus the group's swell *Breaking No New Ground EP*. A potlach beyond your wildest dreams!

—Richard Gehr

Little Milton
The Sun Masters
Rounder

Little Milton
Too Much Pain
Malaco

Little Milton Campbell is a guitar-stinging, grit'n'honey-throated history of the post-war blues. Forty years and three number one hits since he debuted on Sonny Boy Williamson's "King Biscuit Time" radio show, he's still charting, thanks to Malaco Records, the Mississippi indie that's also rekindled the soul-blues flame of Johnnie Taylor and Bobby "Blue" Bland. The near-simultaneous release of Milton's latest soulful horn-and-string extravaganza for Malaco and his earliest down-home Delta-funk sessions for Sam Phillips' Sun Records in Memphis neatly bookends the career to date of a bluesman who's always hung onto his black audience by staying a step ahead of the white one.



Bongwater
Too Much Sleep
Shimmy-Disc

Kramer and Ann Magnuson of Bongwater—the Shimmy-Disc shaman and the unlikely TV star; the Carlos and Carla Castaneda of the bi-coastal blunderground—are sleeping together again, so to speak. Eighty-eight's *Double Bummer* was a surreal mind-fuck of epic ambitions, and *Too Much Sleep* explores even spookier nocturnal territory. Impossible to capsulize, it's a brilliant, confusing, and unexpectedly tuneful late-night wake-up call from tomorrow's party lines.

In his *Smile*-y title track, Kramer rues time wasted in slumber, but everywhere else, lead singer/lyricist Magnuson wallows in the depths of dreamland, often reciting transcriptions of her own somatic activity. Kramer supplies appropriately free-associational sounds full of unexpected melodic twists, atmospheric alterations, and special F/X. In such songs as "Psychedelic Sewing Room," "Teena Stays the Same" and "One Hand on the Road," Magnuson describes "kind of desperate, kind of cute" characters who harbor toxic undercurrents of paranoid nostalgia behind the grainy TV faces. ("The Drum," a 1973 *Slapp Happy* song, serves as the band's ecstatic/mystical anthem.)



The rock-edged, high-energy blues so dear to today's campus fans is a throwback to the 50s, when Bobby B and Little Milton took B.B. King's electric so

Continued on page 84

BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL



Nick Lowe

When pundits and fans sit down and try to figure out why their particular fave cult star isn't a big star, Nick Lowe's name has to come up. If overall good intentions and sincerity were important, Lowe, despite his iffy recording career, would be bumping some kids, new and old, off the charts, but life ain't fair, and Lowe has on more than one occasion fallen asleep at the wheel. Someone with such an overt love of music and all its mythology can sometimes confuse making it look easy with taking the easy way out. Lowe has done this for his last few albums, and I sheepishly admit to being one of the few who actually liked (sort of) *Pinker and Prouder* than *Pre-*

vious

, his last exercise as a good natured journeyman. This time around, on *Party of One*, Lowe has figured out that you don't have to let them see you sweat while writing great songs. *Party of One* contains his best material since the heyday of *Pure Pop for Now People* and the record that is considered his best, *Labor of Lust*. Lowe has always been the proud owner of a wicked sense of humor: he named an early British release *Bowi* after David Bowie's *Low*, and the overseas title for his American debut *Pure Pop* was *Jesus of Cool*, still one of the greatest titles ever. A true smartass, Lowe possesses a convert's fanaticism when it comes to *Musicus Americanus*. It seems almost a cruel twist of geography that he and Dave Edmunds, his frequent producer and later Rockpile mate, weren't born the sons of itinerant Okies although Lowe must have been in p g heaven when none other than Johnny Cash became his pa-in-law.

His ex-record company, Columbia, released *Basher, the Best of Nick Lowe* late last year. Running down the 25 tracks, it's a pleasant surprise to dig just how many really good songs Lowe has put out over the years.

Let's start with *Pure Pop*, where Lowe leaped from new wave rockers ("Heart of the City") to ersatz reggae ("I Love the Sound of Breaking Glass"). How could you not love a guy who comes up with the tearful couplet, "She was a winner that became her dogg e's dinner"? Around this time, Lowe was also getting quite a rep as the cool producer, bathing

the various acts he worked with (most of the Stiff roster, fellow upstart Elvis Costello, the Damned and, most notably, "Stop your Sobbing" by the Pretenders) in a sound carefully yet simply coaxed out of years of paying loving attention to the atmosphere and groove of American riffs and twangs. Lowe may have had a "dry" British wit, but he got the most mileage from music that came outta dingy bars and surf-side towns. *Labor of Lust* contained the big hit "Cruel to be Kind," and the shimmering harmony and heavy swing of that song are Lowe at his best. After that relative success, Lowe formalized his studio band, turning it into Rockpile, whose "Seconds of Pleasure" became their debut and swan song. Rockpile was always a guaranteed funfest onstage, with Edmunds and Lowe alternating leadership, depending on who was pushing a solo record. After Rockpile ceased as a vinyl thang, Lowe (or at least my interest in him), started to wane "Nick the Knife," "The Abominable Showman," "Nick Lowe and His Cowboy Outfit," "The Rose of England"—all contain a gem or two, all find Lowe with a new and more (yes, real) American bunch of dudes, but all seem sort of lifeless. This is Lowe with a lot of cheesy stuff ("Half a Boy and Half a Man"), a lot of Cajun jive, and for the most part fairly forgettable material. Lowe finally recorded his Freebird, "I Knew the Bride (When She Used to Rock and Roll)," which had always been one of Edmunds' staples, but producer Huey Lewis toned it down.

On *Party of One*, his Reprise debut, Lowe makes it all work, again. Case in point the wickedly vicious "All Men are Liars." On lyrical content alone, this would be a gem, seeing that it's the first song I've heard to rhyme Rick Astley and ghastly. Not content just to be catty and smugly superior, Lowe and company (including Ry Cooder and the poor man's Booker T., Paul Carrack) have got themselves a great little pop song complete with a mock girl group chorus that's as catchy as it is smart. Lowe has gotten back into the biz of writing good songs, and even when they seek more than a little of nonsense, (the rocking opener "Shing Shang," or his hilarious rewriting of Noah, "I Want to Build a Jumbo Ark"), they are short, sweet, memorable and filled with "familiar" riffs. The standout track is the wistful "What's Shakin' on the Hill," which any country artist worth his salt would be stupid not to cover. It's pure emotion from the understated brushes on the drums to the stately strumming of the guitar. This from an artist who more often than not tended to mask feeling with glibness. The beauty of "Party of One" is that Lowe manages to stay sharp while allowing himself the (occasional) reflective aside. Lowe has always been measured as much by his associations and his perceived hipness as what he actually had to say. Nick Lowe, song writer, hasn't rolled trippingly off the tongue in a long time. It does now.

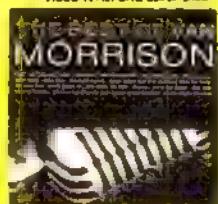
—Amy Linden

Celebrate 25 years of Van Morrison magic with an all-new, live home video **VAN MORRISON: The Concert** and the definitive song collection **THE BEST OF VAN MORRISON**. Featuring "Moondance," "Gloria," "Have I Told You Lately" and more! Look and listen. It's Van Morrison.

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Continued from page 82

phisticated on back to the gutbucket and inspired the metal ic Chicago keening of Otis Rush and Magic Sam. With its fuse-blowing proto skronk guitar, raw vocals and raucous Ike Turner band charts, Milton's Sun Masters is a frat boy's delight. The first half contains both sides of each of his three Sun singles; the second, deeper and wilder, consists of outtakes. The final, March, 1954, session produced the Howlin' Wolf-ish "Lookin' For My Baby" and its downbeat flipside, "Homesick For My Baby," both sporting guitar leads that could curl sinker nails into barbed wire.

When Sam Phillips found Elvis and lost the blues, Milton, recording for Bobbin and Chess, dogged Bobby Bland into the soul era and onto the charts. With rich, gospel singing, lush arrangements and progressively minimal guitar, he weathered the disco years on a succession of labels before resurfacing on Malaco. *Too Much Pain* sticks closely to his mature formula: big, punchy orchestrations, lots of cheating songs, B.B. clone guitar and the finest voice in the blues biz. What sets it apart are sly, modern lyrics on tunes like "The Cradle Is Robbin' Me," "Gonna Start A Rumor" and "Runway," where he tells his faithless woman, "You're like a runaway, baby, everybody's landing on you." It's a line even Sonny Boy would have been proud of.

—Larry Birnbaum

Kid Creole and his Coconuts

and the Coconuts' tunes worked well in concert, but since their 1980 debut on Ze, their records have been less than satisfying.

Ten years later, Darnell has a problem. The band is reasonably (formerly wildly) popular in Europe, but back home they can't get arrested. Ten years as a cult item is galling, especially after you've had a taste of the big time.

Over the three years since his last album, Andy 'Coatimundi' Hernandez has jumped ship, taking his salaficated sound with him. This has left Darnell to his calypso pan-American devices. He's added fellow Savannah Band alumnus Cory Daye as chief female foil and signed to a new record company. Darnell has decided that now is his moment for American stardom. He has made his move with quality. *Private Waters in the Great Divide* is the most consistent, satisfying Kid Creole and the Coconuts album to date. The songs are ripe with the virtues of KC&C's past work—urbane wit, multiple entendres and infectious tropical rhythms. Moreover, the whole album is constructed and sequenced to maximize these virtues.

Without Hernandez as music director, Darnell has called in outside ears on a couple of key tracks. The first single, "The Sex of It" is a Prince joint. Surprisingly, it doesn't stick out, following in format with the funky "I Like Girls" and the wry soca "No More Casual Sex." New York Stories throwaway, "Taking A Holiday," seems less extraneous followed by in their English cover of "Lambada," into which Latin production aces The Jerks set Cory Daye's velvet and sandpaper voice like a gem.



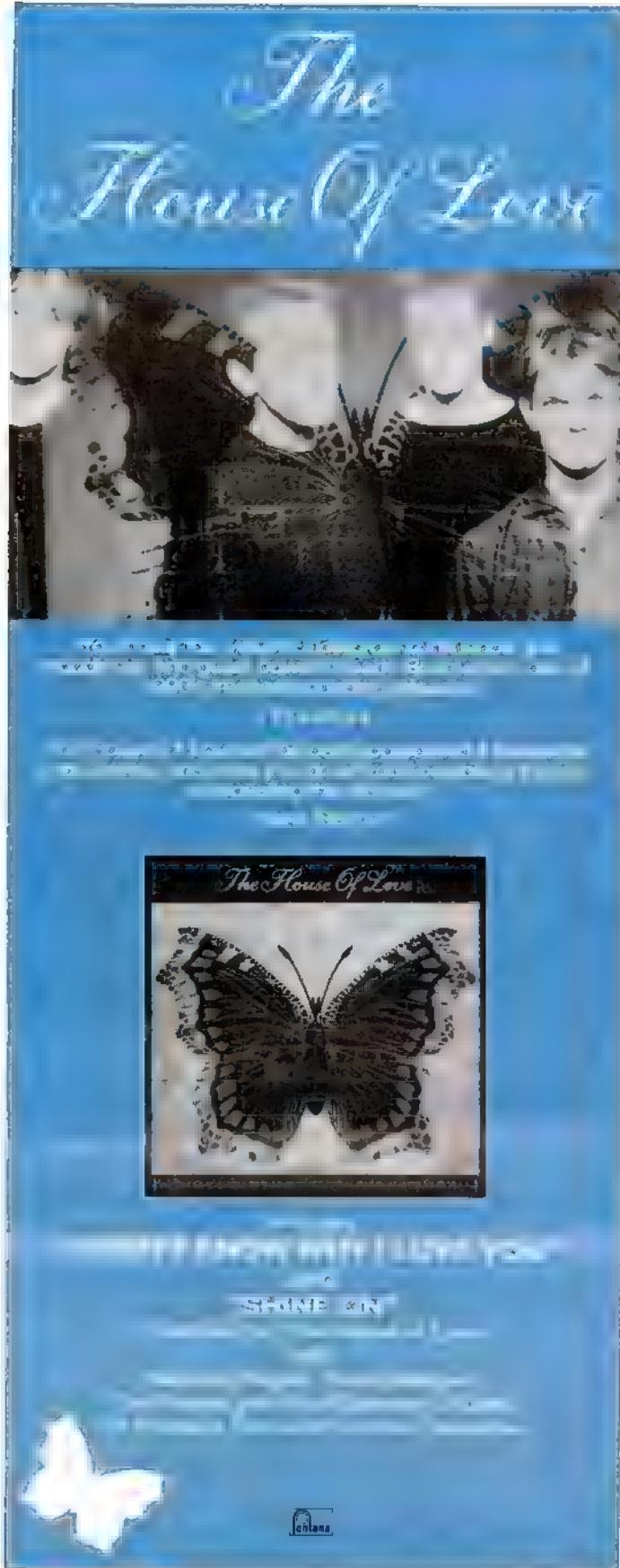
Kid Creole and the Coconuts

Private Waters in the Great Divide
Columbia

Even when August (Kid Creole) Darnell is writing for records, he's writing soundtracks. Historically, Kid Creole

It's rare that a cult band can make a pop move without alienating its fans. But Kid Creole and the Coconuts have never pretended to be anything but a pop band. Europe has known that for nearly a decade. Maybe now they can get arrested at home.

Hank Bordowitz





Marianne Faithfull

Blazing Away
Island

When *Broken English*, Marianne Faithfull's 1979 comeback LP (of sorts) proved her suicide note "Sister Morphine" to be nothing more than a phase, she got tagged a "survivor," as if the 60s were a holocaust in the frame of Altamont as Armageddon. But Marianne, like a lot of other people that cold night in December when Meredith Hunter's death effectively ended the Woodstock nation, was nowhere to be found.

Okay, so I'm no biographer. I don't know where she was. But if one violent crowd and senseless death can condemn a generation, then the threads of faith are surely a lot thinner than you or I like to believe. With the Berlin Wall down, heaping spoonfuls of concentrated faith are being added to the turgid waters. That, my friend, is what Marianne Faithfull is all about.

On *Blazing Away*, her new supergreat live LP, she sings Lennon's "Working Class Hero," switching midway through to an all-inclusive "we," so Lennon's emotional quasi-pudginess becomes a big-hearted "we're all fucking peasants as far as I can see." Marianne takes her audience into her palm to embrace. She gives her soul to "Sister Morphine," improving on her past performance while slashing the Stones' to bits. The studio cut, "Blazing Away," with its "strange looking exile with a passion for the dangers" perfectly captures the aura that haunts everything Marianne does. When she asks "What is the reason things change?" the only thing for sure is that you feel "relief that things change."

It's not the Power of Positive Thinking, and it's more than words from a "survivor." If you can't shut up or be happy, *Blazing Away* is the answer to your prayer. If this sort of thing doesn't make sense to you, rock 'n' roll as attitude must be the furthest thing from your mind.

—Rob O'Connor

Antietam

Burgoo
Triple X

The first British punk bands had things easy: they could still derive legitimate urgency from the conviction that both music and the world were washed-up dinosaurs headed for doom. But in America circa 1990, where hip hop is responsible for nearly everything that might still be called musically innovative or politically significant, the young white intellectuals of alternative rock can't exactly claim to have the inside line on what's going on. Instead, the best of the lot have fought stagnation by turning inward, looking for the grand and the deadly in the equal opportunity relents of everyday life.

Antietam, whose nucleus—guitarist Tara Key and bassist Tim Harris—hails from Louisville and currently resides in Manhattan, understand what it means to eye the future with a simultaneous sense of possibility and frustration. But on 1986's *Music From Elba*, they didn't stop to think about it, just surged forward, frenzied guitar sprawling over insistent double-bass undertow. *Elba* seemed to claim that in exile (from home, friends, media "reality"), both claustrophobia and constant motion become inevitable; every fear of hopelessness is met head-on by a charge to anywhere.



Stripped down to a trio for their latest, *Burgoo*, (singer/second bassist Wolf Knapp headed back to school and drummer Charles Schulz replaced Sean Mullan), Tara and Tim match the leaner lineup with songs whose complexity is more a function of what's left out than what's crammed in. This often works beautifully: "Something's Happening" gives hardly a detail about what's driving them mad with anticipation, but the glorious guitar and Tara's desperation "Come on, come on and tell me"—could get you just as wound up. The urgency itself becomes the point. Each time they reach such peaks of intensity, the songs on *Burgoo* inevitably transcend what they initially promised. Wistfulness becomes overpowering desire; uncertainty darkens into fear.

Musically, the band is more than up to the task, maintaining even with one bass

the ominous pulse that gave *Music From Elba* its kick. It's less constant now, waiting in the shadows of songs whose surfaces seem lighter and more controlled. To the band's credit, a new expansiveness, a sense of hope, has begun to challenge their logic of chaos. But in their best moments, the demon that has driven Antietam since their debut still drives this band, making them perfect candidates for letting us know just how everyday life could make you crazy.

—Jen Fleissner



Social Distortion

Social Distortion
Epic

Once upon a time, on the sunny shores of Southern California, there was a thriving hardcore punk scene dominated by bands like the Germs, X and Social Distortion: Angry young things that, over time, lost members to death, solo projects and drugs—in that order. But one of those aforementioned bands, Social Distortion, rose like a Phoenix in 1988 with an album that was a nod to one extended Lost Weekend. Now they've taken that cause one step further with a new release.

Social Distortion, in its present form, only retains two of its original members—Mike Ness, songwriter and vocalist, and Dennis Danell, guitarist. This album serves as a reminder that these boys are still punks at heart, but there's now a blues-inflected sound that wasn't evident in the early days.

A raging cover of Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" is surrounded by grungy lament songs like "Story of My Life" and "It Coulda Been Me." The album has a tormented quality that brings home just how much time Ness spent coping with his personal demons as the LA punk scene crashed and burned in the '80s.

In those days, rock 'n' roll anarchy was the road well traveled, drugs the vehicle and alcohol the fuel for the tank. Social Distortion was well acquainted with that stretch of pavement, and now, with their new clean and sober stance, we can all be privy to their distorted vision. The album is not overly preachy, with the exception of "Drug Train," and all the tracks are meant to be listened to with the volume way up.

—Lauren Spencer



Spawned from the murk of New York's underground—Prong emerges, "BEG TO DIFFER," their new album delivers bare-boned crush rock. Prong's "FOR DEAR LIFE" and "LOST AND FOUND" have been heard as part of the theme to MTV's HEADBANGER'S BALL. Now see Prong in their first video, "BEG TO DIFFER," and live on their world tour.

PRONG. "BEG TO DIFFER" ON EPIC.



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underground



Roger Miller's *No Man's Band*

Column by Byron Coley

Funny" though it may seem to the more cosmopolitan readers among you, this column is being written (by hand) in trailer 6, Treasure Island Camper Van Park, Bicheno, Tasmania. It's what you might call "a tad off the beaten path," which makes it kinda ideal for this vacation (which I'm in the midst of). As a center for happenin' cultural shenanigans, however, it makes Somerville, Massachusetts, look like Ground Zero. In fact, the next time someone mocks Somerville for being a backwater I will probably laugh in a sophisticated fashion and piss in their beer. Indeed, as I was leafing through the latest edition of *Tasmanian Travelways* this afternoon, I felt a certain heart-grown-fond yearning for

my idiotic, buckiehead stomping grounds. Gee, I wonder who's playing at the Mid East this week? I wonder how the Sonic Youth/World of Pooh show went? Etc. Etc. Hey, what can I say? Boston's okay. There are even some very decent records from there. And while I've heard that bona fide *monsters* have been released by Sub Skin Cables and the Titanics in my absence, for my own purposes I'm gonna run a few hep Boston things through my brain and try to recreate the feel I get watching Bily Ruane doing the frug on a table full of beer at a Busted Statues show.

The spate of poorly conceived Mission of Burma records released over the last few years has made the defunct combo into a hep ghost hovering in dark corners of the indy rock scene. Regardless of this spectral persistence, several of the band's former members

have continued to produce music, and two of them have just released excellent new LPs. The first is *Damage the Enemy* by **No Man's Band** (New Alliance, PO Box 1389, Lawndale CA 90260). NMB is the new trio led by Burma's guitarist, Roger Miller, and their debut album is totally bitchen pop-fuckery. Actually only one side features the trio (w/Russ Smith and Ken Winocur), the other presents Roger "solo," backed by a buncha sampled percussion. But both sides are tit-deep in the velvet garage-drone idiocy of Eno's best early 70s sides and will nicely cleanse the ears of anyone who found Roger's last solo work too much in the vein of Peter "Nancy Boy" Gabriel. *Damage the Enemy* is like a more forced-up version of Miller's brilliant Oh . . . LP. If he lived in Tasmania, he'd be locked up in a little room

The other Burma-descended disk is actually a double LP by the **Volcano Suns** entitled *Thing of Beauty* (SST, PO Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260). It still seems possible to me that the band's last disk, *Farced*, is their most satisfying effort, but there's much to be worshipped on this new one. The Suns' sound is (and has always been) so urgent, specific and sloppily unique that you may imagine that they'd be stretched thin across two LPs. If that's your opine you'd do well to retool it. *Thing of Beauty* "works" like Ed Norton stuck chest deep in a river of shit. Broken into sep-but-equal halves, *Beauty* consists of one LP of the Suns' "standard" fly-pecked skuzz and one LP that would be tough to hang their hat on in a blindfold test. Yeah, there are moments of the pop-song-goo-explosions the trio's known for, but most of its moves are attempts to subvert the lion's share of their natural gesticulation. Each song raves off in a diff, oblique and thoroughly wacked angle. From a great cover of Eno's "Needles In A Camel's Eye" to the percussive, soundtracy putt of "Malamundo," the lads pull out all stops and then some. And the width of their stoop-grasp is so all encompassing that it's easy to dub this as the band's best line-up to the power behind a long-gone Boston legend called Sorry) is a full-on facepusher at all times, Bob Weston's bass is a superb mix of flush, fill & pump, and Peter Prescott . . . well, what can you say? The voice, the tubs, the 'do—what a guy. If he were my pet gorilla I'd probably have to shoot him, but since he isn't I can sit on my ass in Tasmania and toast another in his long series of fine records. It's been a decade since "Academy Fight Song," and I don't think he's crapped out yet. Yay!

One Boston band that's been around since the days of Burma, without ever getting a modicum of the respect due them, is **The Neats**. The Neats are a decade old now and if the fates had dealt them a kinder hand they would've been huge ages ago. They began as purveyors of a weird, unique (for the time) jangle-wheeze psych, but the band's career flickered on and off through the 80s, and as the decade ended they seemed to be stuck in a long hair boogie ass rut. Now, however,

there's a swell new album called *Blues End Blue* (Coyote, PO Box 112, Hoboken NJ 07030), which melds hard rock kickin' with their old melodicism. Eric Martin's voice and songwriting have always had lotsa top-notch potential and *Blues* gives him more room to move than he's had since the combo's debut LP on Ace of Hearts. There's no way they aren't guilty of overt-rockism, but they do it well enough to transcend the genre's douchebaggy confines. And yeah, they'd probably have the longest male hair in Tasmania, but that's no crime, Pippi.

A newish and extremely snappy Boston band you may care to hear from is the **Cheater Slicks**. They've just emitted a debut LP, *On Yr Knees* (Gawdawful, PO Box 1331, Cambridge MA 02238), that is one of the best trad-scum outings I've heard in a 'roo's whisker (that's a local phrase). A gruntn', rank mess of ug-lancing puh that's 60s-rooted in the same way as the Cramps or Pussy Galore, the Slicks are more than capable of dribbling their own goo on any club that'll have 'em. Their album is one of the secret gems of localist shimmy and is assured of popping many nuts world wide.

"The Neats are a decade old now and if the fates had dealt them a kinder hand they would've been huge ages ago."

Another youngish combo of extreme hipness is **Hostile Heyday**, who've just put out their first album, *Abandoned* (Tantrum, PO Box 657, Cambridge, MA 02238). After you quit mouthing the usual comparisons to Burma and the Urinals, put a big dirty sock in your mouth and spend some time considering Heyday as a glandish, wind-o grnd-o trio with a uniquely sizzling whizz. On *Abandoned* they don't warp it up quite as weirdly as they did on spots of the three 7's that preceded it, but their shriek-beller pip'n'fade is a terrifically nice dick in the pouch of current coll rock denseness-as-stupidity. They write themselves some hep fuckin' tunage, pile the parts up like burning tiles assembled on the corpse of Idi Amin, and emote like a buncha worms that look just like the Embarrassment—little glasses and all! If these pups stay together long enough, they stand a

chance of being hepster picks in every cool trailer park from here to Darwin!

Cambridge's nude-rock scene may have been a flash in one summertime's pan, but its dick swingin', tit waggin' hoedowns produced at least a couple bands that'll last. One is **Hullabaloo** and their new LP, *Beat Until Stiff* (Toxic Shock, PO Box 43787, Tucson, AZ 85733) rolls like a big old tank truck fulla beer and piss taking a fast turn onto Alice Cooper Memorial Turnpike. And this outing may not have quite enough trumpet use to really "suit" me, but the mere fact that Hullabaloo use such a tooter is a heartening non-rockist gesture. Whatever, this is a good 'n fudgy pile of thuddy bramble with a fine guest appearance by Mr. Horribly Charred Infant. What record in Tasmania can make such a claim?

Although **The Five** were formed in Pittsburgh, PA, the fact that they moved to B-town in the mid-80s makes their placement here highly appropriate. They lived and played in Boston for a buncha years, cut a number of rankin' tunes that were local radio tape hits, then called it quits. A thuggish rocking bunch, the Five always seemed a bit too straight outta some slidey, gruff, post-Stones continuum for hepper 'n'-ye types to really grapple with 'em, but this posthumous collection might make people start claiming to have seen them frequently. Their riddim slunk lurch now starts to make me think a bit of the early Birthday Party, Reed Paley's voice has enough grug monstrosity to fill one of my brain nooks exactly, and this eponymous LP, *The Five* (BEM, PO Box 8619, Pittsburgh, PA 15221) is a worth-dripping pit filled with true "street rock shit." Of the two sessions represented on this LP, I probably prefer the earlier one since the weird layer angling of the guitars reminds me of Died Pretty's drug surges, but the whole thing is way okay. Which is not a phrase that gets bandied about much down here.

Meanwhile, one of Boston's eternal lights, Billy Borgioli (ex-Real Kids, Classic Runs, Primitive Souls) has a new combo called **The Varmints**. They've got a mini-LP named *Spread Out* (Dog Meat, GPO Box 2366 V, Melbourne 3001, Australia) which is more of the classic R&R stuff for which Mr. Borgioli is known. There's hot guitar explosion aplenty, many chords are slammed, and the overall heft is something like mid-70s English pub rock pumped full of steroids and Ritalin. And since it came out in Australia, I'll assume they might even groove on it down here in "Tassie." Though how I'd find out I'll never know.

Thanks. Send exotic goods (but no cassettes) to PO Box 301, W Somerville, MA 02144, USA.

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WORLD BEAT!

Global Styling

Column by Richard Gehr

Charanga, jive, vallenata, zouk, rai, taarab, cumbia, forro, griot, jaipongan, benga, soukous, cadence, rumba, salsa, saba-saba, merengue, flamenco, mbira, tufo, Zulu and filmi—the footloose grooves found on GlobeStyle Records can send your brain Concorde-ing off to Madagascar, Zambia, Pakistan, Zanzibar, Khartoum, Sudan, Lesotho, South Africa, Mali, Kabylia, Kenya, Tangier, Andalucia, Martinique, Colombia, Venezuela, Guadeloupe, Paris, Miami, New York and other locales where people gather together and consume exotic comestibles while shimmying to

strange and wonderful rhythms

Since 1985, Roger Armstrong and Ben Mandelson's London-based label has issued—or reissued—much of the world's best unheard music. After 52 exquisitely packaged and comprehensively annotated releases, the pair have proven themselves infallibly gifted distinguishers of silk from sow, while preventing obscure but significant sonic traditions from disappearing wholesale into ethnomusicology's academic maw, all without benefit of any pop star's bandwagon endorsement.

What selfless explorers I imagined Mandelson and Armstrong to be, wandering through the musical bush armed only with their passports, a digital tape machine, a couple of microphones and a change of underwear! How soundly these selfless

protectors of non-Western music must sleep knowing what they've done for international cultural history!

Well, sort of

"At the end of the day," Armstrong confessed during a recent visit to New York, "it's selling pop music." And as director of Ace Records—where GlobeStyle thrives modestly alongside the reissued classics of prestigious rock, jazz, blues and R&B labels—this bearded Irishman oughta know

Adds Mandelson, a guitar playing Liverpudlian: "It's all ephemeral music we happen to really like."

And much more. Take, for example, *Blow! Besir! Blow!* by Jova Stojiljkovic "Besir" and His Brass Orchestra, a traditional Yugoslav wedding band that can sound at times like New Orleans' Dirty Dozen wailing in double time with Herb Alpert's Tijuana Brass. Despite the boffo reviews, Mandelson appreciates how this sort of thing can polarize listeners. GlobeStyle released it, though, "simply because we have to put these records out!" This month, watch for two albums of mesmerizing Indonesian pop featuring singer Euis Komariah (jaipongan Java and *The Sound of Sunda*), an LP of acoustic benga from Nairobi (*Luo Roots*), and a sterling compilation of Indian film music (*Golden Voices From the Silver Screen*).

When they began, however, the GlobeStyle guys' first problem was convincing foreign artists not to send them the "extremely good copies of *Saturday Night Fever*," Armstrong reca ls with a shudder, but the real McCoy. Happily, the label's half dozen inaugural releases anticipated nearly as many world-music trends. *Dance Cadence!* was the first compilation of Antillean zouk; *He O Oe Oe!* offered the accordion music of Lesotho that Paul Simon "borrowed" for *Graceland*, and Kanda Bongo Man's *Non Stop Non Stop* introduced the sort of blissfully energetic Zaire-Parsian soukous that should be taking off domestically any second now. Not to mention the label's largest seller, Ofra Haza's Yemenite Songs (released domestically by

Shanachie as *The Fifty Gates of Wisdom*), which inspired a slew of synthetically disco-fitted traditional folk styles.

Apart from licensing, the GlobeStyle team has undertaken four field trips—to Madagascar, Zanzibar, Kenya and Mozambique—that have so far resulted in nine albums of original field recordings, with several more in the pipeline. Excepting Chris Strachwitz's terrific American fieldwork on *Arihole*, or Joe Boyd's special projects for Hannibal, the field recording tradition, which goes back to the British National Sound Archive's 1903 Afghan recordings, has been a lost art since the Nonesuch Explorer series' heyday. And where would a generation of British blues artists have acquired its repertoire if American producers hadn't made it their business to roam through the South recording obscure singers?

During their recent Mozambique excursion, Armstrong and Mandelson recorded 51 bands over three weeks. Traveling around the country by air, the pair captured xylophone orchestras, skiffle groups, Muslim women's choirs and the pipe-and-drum tufo sound for at least two upcoming compilations.

"We had to fly," recalls Armstrong, "because the few roads are too dangerous. The country's full of brutal banditos armadas trained by the Renamo (the counter-government force funded by South Africa and Portuguese colonials). The first thing most groups would play for us would be government praise songs, like 'Twenty-Fifth of September' or 'Sixteenth of July.'"

"That's what you do in African praise singing," explains Mandelson, "you praise the people in power who can protect you. But then we'd ask, 'What did you sing before the revolution? Just give us the usual songs about love and hate.' I've got nothing against revolutionary songs. I just wish they were better."

GlobeStyle caters to another sort of revolutionary taste with records by 3 Mustaphas 3, who toured the US in May. This mysterious, befezzed sextet salutes the Uncle Patrel with his favorite songs on *Heart of Uncle* (released domestically on Rykodisc). The album includes giddy Balkanesque renditions of music from Greece, India, Turkey, Albania, Haiti, Nigeria, etc., as though the GlobeStyle catalog had been shoved whole through what Mandelson calls "the Mustapha mangler."

And speaking of GlobeStyle's catalog, you can, and should, acquire this brightly colored document from 48-50 Steele Road, London NW10 7AS (Tel. 01-453-1311). And don't forget to saba-saba!



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Multicultural Nineties

Column by Frank Owen

Singles

As those of you with the eyes to see and ears to hear will have noticed, pop music is undergoing a marked change of climate at the moment, thanks largely to the global warming effect of hip hop and house music. Entropy is out and unity is in, art

on contemporary black music. This was a time when the DJ-driven musics of house and hip hop were on the rise and verbal warfare had erupted in the pages of the British music press between old-guard indie rockers and new school soul boys. Hostilities reached perhaps

claiming there existed a conspiracy to keep young white indie rock bands off the show in favor of safe, meaningless black music. Such comments hardly make Morrissey the Nostradamus of 90s pop.

In the years since the interview it seems as if the soul boys' wildest dreams came true (along with Morrissey's worst nightmares) not only in the proliferation of all manner of hip hop and house records in the UK Top 40 but the birth of a vibrant homegrown scene led by Soul II Soul, as well as the defection of many indie rockers to the ranks of dance music (Happy Mondays, the Stone Roses, Jesus Jones, Primal Scream, etc.)

In a recent edition of *The Face*, Johnny Marr is quoted on the breakup of the Smiths to the effect that there came a time when the band had to choose between being Herman's Hermits and Sly and the Family Stone. Marr wanted the former while Morrissey wanted the latter. Guess whose side posterity is on?

Unlike Steven Morrissey, fellow Mancunians The Fall know what time it is. As far back as 1986, they saw the creative possibilities inherent in next-school black music when they tried to arrange a collaboration with New York producer and then King of the Beats, Mantronix. That fell through, but their latest UK single "Telephone Thing" (available in the US on their PolyGram album *Extricate*) finds them in cahoots with British producer Coldcut ("Stop This Crazy Thing," "People Hold On"). Unlike Primal Scream and their latest single "Loaded" (a loop of a section of the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy For The Devil" set to a Soul II Soul-style beat), this isn't a case of a rock band jumping on the dance music bandwagon. The Fall haven't been transformed into a house music outfit. They're still their cantankerous selves, but with a cleaner, more defined sound that possesses an added volition thanks to Coldcut.

In this charged atmosphere, "Panic" by the Smiths, with its "Hang the blessed DJ" refrain, was widely misconstrued as an anti black music anthem. Talking to the blessed Steven about this, he launched into an unprompted attack on the British television show "Top Of the Pops"

"Enough" (New Medium) by Strafe (of "Set It Off" fame)

The Joe Smooth record comes with the inscription, "Dedicated to the people of South Africa and to freedom in the world" and standard-issue Martin Luther King samples (just like hip hop records come with standard-issue Malcolm X samples). Nothing new here musically but definitely pertinent.

Recalling the positive messages of pre-disco dance music, "Unity" once again raises the question of how gay African-Americans—the despised of the despised—can produce music so imbued with joy and possibility. Rather than being critical of life, "Unity" is creative of life. A cultural call to arms that is impossibly utopian but avoids the anger and recrimination of traditional political pop.

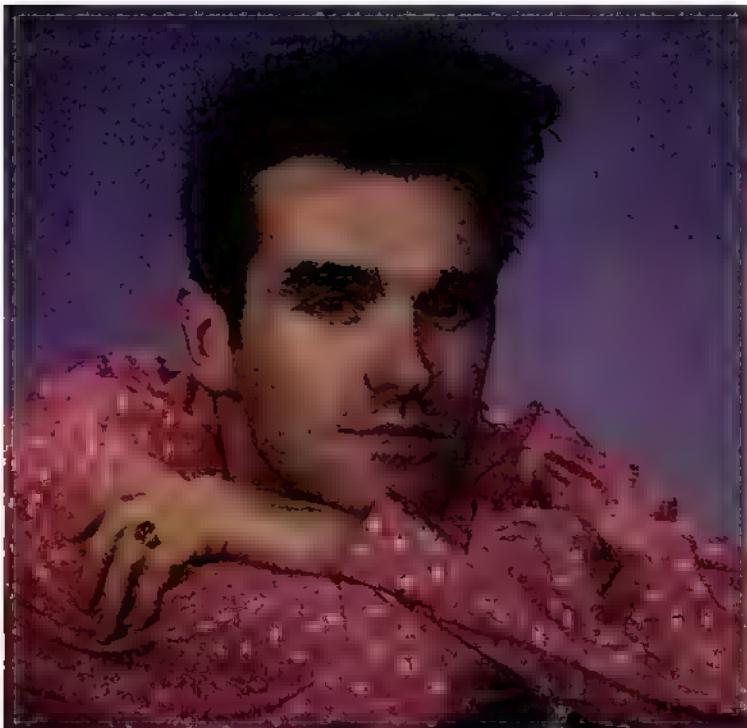
The sadly neglected Strafe could experience something of a renaissance in the 90s. Steve Standard was on the conscious tip long before it was fashionable. As the motto says beneath his New Medium Records logo: "The Music Will Bring Us Together." "Get Enough" is inspirational dance music at its finest. But who's listening?

The ignorant comments of Eazy E in SPIN's recent N.W.A. piece moved Strafe to respond in song. "Talking Garbage" contains the following lines. "Maybe you're just a smoke screen / For a consciousness unseen / You're living a pipe dream / If you think you can make it in this world all alone / You've just been given a bone / So Eazy E write home . . . We be love, we be power, we be one and the same."

Say hello to the multicultural 90s, which may indeed turn out to be a more rad cal decade than the 60s. The difference this time is that ecstasy replaces acid and black folks are gonna have a much bigger say.

The A-list

Grace Jones "Amado Mio" (Capitol)
Krystal and Shabba Ranks "Twice My Age" (Pow Wow)
Family Stand "Ghetto Heaven" (Atlantic)
The Chimes "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" (Capitol)



Knock Knock. Who's there? Morrissey. Morrissey who? Exactly.

is boring while culture is happening, arched eyebrow irony has been replaced by meaning what you say. Say bye-bye to theory, bloodless po-mo dilettantes and David Byrne. Say hello to "lived experience," multicultural literacy and Soul II Soul.

As with the rise of any new aesthetic, certain artists who refuse to get with the program find their reputations radically overhauled. None more so than Morrissey, who, in the UK, has gone from godhead to dickhead practically overnight.

In 1986, at the height of his power, I interviewed Morrissey about his views

their most ludicrous extreme during a particularly agitated *NME* editorial meeting where a furious row erupted between two editors over whether the Fall or Mantronix should grace the next week's front cover. Mantronix won, one *NME* editor burst into tears, and the rest is history.

In this charged atmosphere, "Panic" by the Smiths, with its "Hang the blessed DJ" refrain, was widely misconstrued as an anti black music anthem. Talking to the blessed Steven about this, he launched into an unprompted attack on the British television show "Top Of the Pops"

Continued from page 29

going to do? I thought I should do something on my own, and the band was like, right, right—do something on your own. So you go off to the studio and you realize—doing something on your own is really boring. No fun there whatsoever. So who can I do it with? It just evolved so slowly. I didn't sit there thinking I want this sort of band, I want two Americans or whatever in it—you just start working with people 'cause you wanted to do something else. And then as you start listening to it you think, well, hey, this sounds all right.

What, if anything, does the name *Revenge* mean to you?

Well, I wouldn't tell you that anyway. You might not have had it yet, for all you know. I can't blow it by giving it all away to you now, can I? Seriously, finding names for groups is a pain in the ass. I came across *Revenge* on the back of George Michael's jacket—the "Faith" video. I thought, oh, hmmm, that looks pretty good. I liked the way it

started from the Joy Division thing, because after we got a certain amount of bad press in England we decided that we don't need this crap, so we said right, no more. And then we came to America with New Order more or less on the back of *Unknown Pleasures* and *Closer*, and we still weren't doing it. But even when we actually got confident enough to talk about it . . . if I was to do an actual normally accepted promo tour of America I'd be working from now until Kingdom come. I used to go around the country with New Order playing and I'd be bumping into *Swing Out Sister* in every bleeding town doing a promo tour. And I used to think, "Well, why don't you just play? At least you could get some fun out of it instead of just endlessly dragging your ass around America doing a promo tour."

Have you heard Galaxie 500's version of "Ceremony"?

Yeah, I met them actually in Manchester. Showed them how to play it right; the girl was playing in the wrong octave. They're nice people, I've

"You go off to the studio and you do something on your own and you realize—doing something on your own is really boring."

looked written down, I didn't really like the name, 'cause too many people are going to look for too much in it. It's only a handle, and yet the connotations in it could be construed as being . . . ahah. The main thing that bugged me about it was I thought it was a bit heavy metal.

The song titles and the band name—it could be Black Flag's new record. It could be a thrash metal band.

(Laughs) Yeah, the thing about it for me is, it's a very good way of doing things that you couldn't do with New Order. Because New Order is always very indirect and sort of vague. And the reason we started out like that was because we were all so shy and nervous and sort of unconfident about what we were doing.

That may be so, but it seems you used your natural reticence to great advantage. It became part of your image—the moody young men.

People still say to me after all these years—why are you doing interviews now when you've never done them in the past? And that's crap. We've always done interviews. It hasn't changed. It

not actually heard the recorded version but I've heard it live. I like it.

It's interesting because they used the song in a more traditional "rock" context, and it worked. Whereas New Order have more or less evolved into a dance band, albeit one that appeals to a rock crowd.

In England we've never had a problem playing the two together. A lot of people you speak to in America will say, "Oh, well, it confuses people." But you don't count "people" as being different than yourself, and it doesn't confuse me. I think the whole thing has stemmed from radio and record companies. That's where the confusion comes from. But I think that people who come to see a gig or whatever couldn't care less. They either like it or they don't. No one's going to say, "Oh, this song uses a drum machine, so it sucks."

How were the songs for the *Revenge* LP written?

This LP was written in the studio, which I think, in retrospect, was a disadvantage. We started working to

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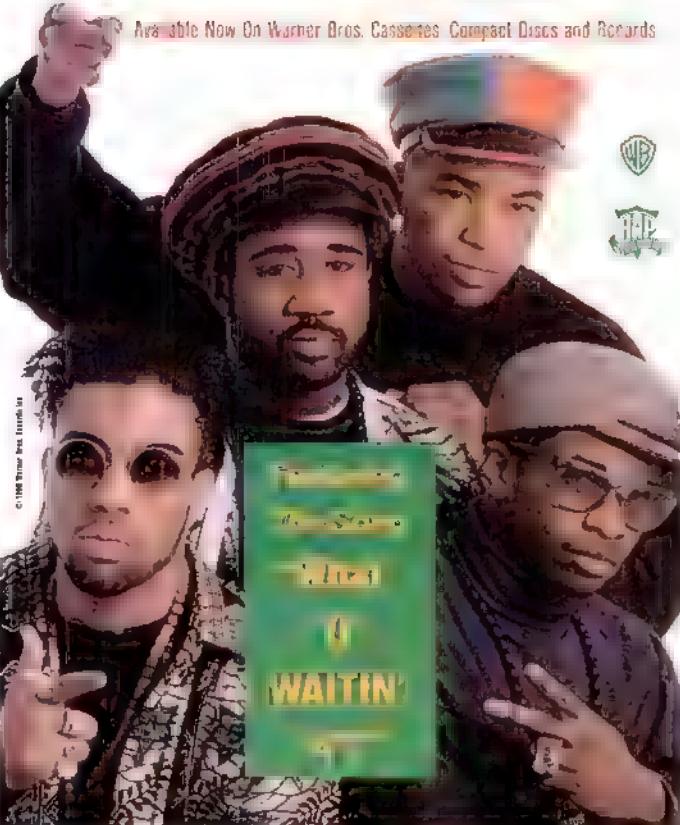
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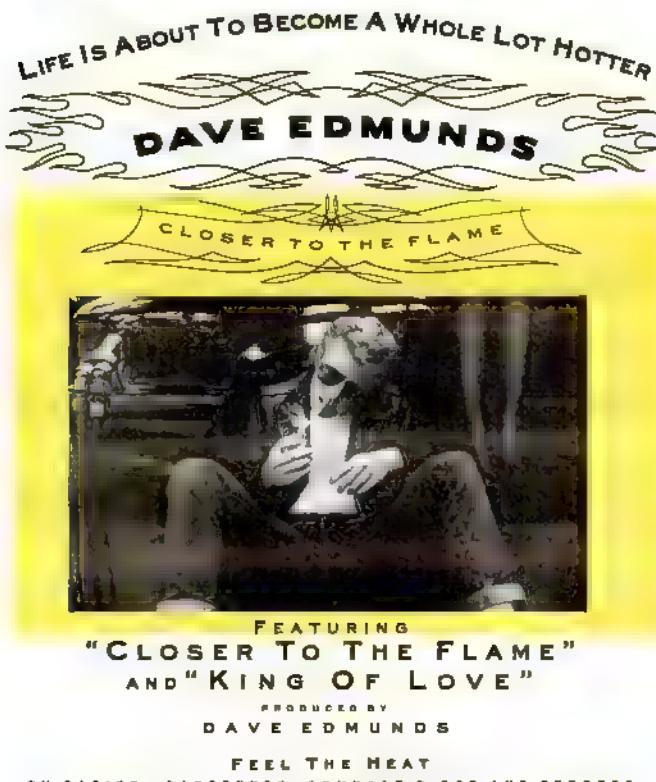
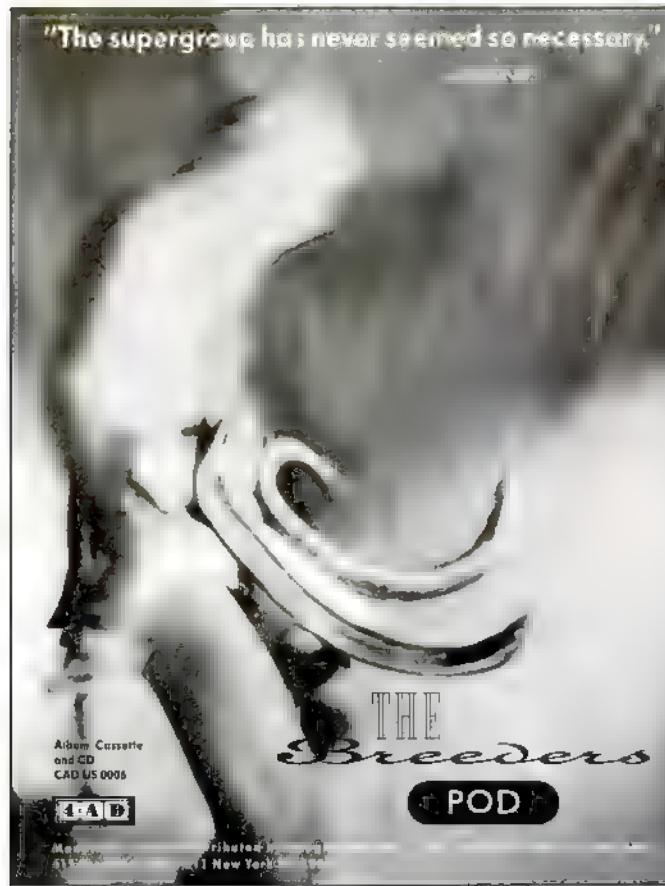
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Peter Hook from page 91

tape before we played together. And then when we'd written the LP and we started playing together cause we got a couple of gigs, we realized that, shit, the interpretation of the live thing was a lot different, and also it inspires you a lot more. In fact, as soon as we started changing it for live, we realized that we were making it a lot better. Which is a real bummer. The thing that strikes me about it is that I can't wait to do the next one

What did you try to do differently with *Revenge* than you do with *New Order*?
The only thing I tried to do on this record was make it a bit more guitar heavy. I think that if I were to compare this music to *New Order*, this is darker and a bit more straightforward

Do you think that when and if *New Order* records again any of your work with *Revenge* will influence the new recording?

I don't think it's going to change *New Order*. I think the actual decision to have a break has changed *New Order*. It's made us a lot more personable and a lot more relaxed with each other because it's taken the pressure off. It's not that sort of treadmill pressure—next tour, let's go to Australia, let's go here, let's go there. You are taking a big risk, 'cause you might not ever get back again. But emotionally and spiritually, as opposed to financially, it was

something we needed to do

You have such a unique style of playing bass—it influenced a lot of people. My wife, for instance, practically learned how to play by listening to your records.

You should have brought her with you, you swine. She'll never forgive you

You're probably right.

I certainly made a stand for bass players, didn't I? Fuck the guitarist that's my motto. No, when I started playing, I didn't really have a clue. No sort of artistic agenda—like, I'm going to liberate the bass guitar. The only influence I had from bass players was that Paul Simonon in the Clash would wear his bass quite low, and I thought that looked pretty good. And the guy in Alice Cooper, 'cause he used to wear his even lower—and I thought that looked even better

Any bands coming out of Manchester now that you're particularly keen on? Stone Roses? Happy Mondays?

Well, yeah, I mean I helped get Happy Mondays started, actually. The guy in Happy Mondays used to be my postman, and he always used to put tapes through my door. And I took it to Tony Wilson at Factory Records and said, "This band's pretty good, you should listen to them." I've played with them, too. I realized they basically are a bunch of beer-swilling slabs—the same way that we are.

AIDS from page 71

patients cannot tolerate AZT at all because it is too toxic." He said he had "lots of friends" who were tolerating the drug just fine. Certainly 50 per cent was a terrible exaggeration. Funny that same figure should now appear on an ACT UP poster

I like your fighting style guys, but please get it together. For all of your righteousness, you ought at least apply the same standards of accuracy in reporting to yourselves as you do to the AIDS reporters you repeatedly attack with such apparent relish and so little grace

But I'm not here to attack ACT UP any more than I think they should waste time attacking us. ACT UP is an enormous, unique and important force in the epidemic, and now that they've finally turned their guns on AZT rather than on critics of AZT, perhaps the dismal truth about the drug can surface, and progress can be made. It is true that they have all along said that AZT has wrongly monopolized and clogged the drug testing system, and that they have protested its exorbitant price. But one

point about AZT they have consistently refused to face is the most important one—whether it is effective. They have always insisted that it is, and that's why their new poster is so surprising.

I asked one ACT UP member, and long-time critic of AZT, Jim Fournatt, to explain this change of heart to me, and he said, "You have to understand that most of the ACT UP members on the Treatment and Data Committee who were defending AZT did so because they were on AZT. But now, the drug has stopped working in those very people, so of course their attitudes toward it change." Fournatt emphasized that it's important to try and understand their dilemma, and I wholeheartedly agree. Enough hysterical finger-pointing already, it only makes things worse. Says Fournatt, "Activists have been manipulated because of their desperation by an insensitive, profit-oriented government and scientific research community."

Can we agree then, ACT UP, that this is the enemy? Let's keep the focus of the attacks, the anger, the invaluable energy, where it is needed, and not just where it wastes everybody's time.

—Celia Farber

Young Republicans from page 36

What is finally striking about the generation of Americans now being educated for power is their utter conformity, their aggressive resistance to looking beneath the surface of the social problems they deplore. They accept the welfare state because they grew up with it. They want better schools and cleaner air because they seem like decent enough goals to shoot for. They participate in social service programs, spend a night at the local homeless shelter, because everyone

house in the suburbs, looks in to the future, and sees a \$1,500 dollar-a-month mortgage payment staring him in the face until his two-month-old daughter graduates from college.

In the final analysis, the father of this generation isn't George Bush but George McGovern. McGovern's nomination finalized in the American mind the identification of the Democratic Party with social change, none of which seemed by the late 70s to have been for the better. The Republican Party stepped neatly into the gap left by the Democrats, and found themselves in sole possession of what had once been the common language of American political discourse: individualism, freedom, patriotism, better schools and less crime. Since the election of Ronald Reagan to the Presidency, the Democrats have been playing an ultimately futile game of catch-up, dwelling on the subtleties of educational reform or low-income housing as an increasingly cynical and apathetic electorate stares off into space, fiddles with the remote control, and pulls the Republican lever every four years. Unless the Democrats happen upon an affirmative message with widespread appeal that is nonetheless markedly different than that put forward by the Republicans, they will lose Presidential election after Presidential election until the Republicans get overconfident or paranoid and pull another Watergate.

Sean Walsh, White House spokesman:
"This is an ideal world. We live in a great country during a great time never before seen—Rome and Greece don't compare."

should pitch in and do their share. George Bush's Washington is like everyone's nightmare of high school in Japan, row upon row of responsible and well-meaning students repeating lessons learnt by rote, day after day after day.

The goals of the young Republicans are well meaning but exceptionally narrow. "I don't think we'll ever end pollution or stop drugs," Andy Foster says. "It's a sad fact," Sean Walsh notes, "but prejudice has always existed and always will. Different groups tend to clash." When asked whether the United States is a nation in decline, Walsh disagrees. "This is an ideal world," he says. "We live in a great country during a great time never before seen—Rome and Greece don't compare." By the end of my week in Washington I began to long for someone to tell me that the poor are not responsible for their present situation, that the military should be abolished, and that what the country really needs is a good five-cent cigar and that they knew just how to make one. Anything to relieve the mind-numbing tedium of interviewing people who sound as moderate and reined to the status quo as someone who has just purchased a

The Republicans may have won this chapter in national political history, but for the true Republican believer the victory was the result of a Faustian bargain. The Republican party won the battle for the hearts and minds of the American people at the price of its own soul. As the minority party, Republicans had the luxury of developing a reasonably coherent philosophical framework for political opposition to welfare statism. As the Executive Branch of Government, the Republican Party now finds itself standing for the status quo. "We have seen the welfare state," the Republican field commanders report to headquarters, "and it is us."

Programs begun by the Fellows of the Democratic Policy Committee when they were the idealistic young staffers of the Great Society are now managed with reasonable efficiency by the young moderates of the Bush Administration. The question is whether, with the multitude of new challenges that face our country as it prepares itself to enter a new millennium in a radically different world, entirely new solutions and new ways of thinking are called for. If they are, they're unlikely to come from the men and women most likely to be in positions to provide them, fifteen or twenty years hence.

Craig Daniels



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A black and white photograph of a man and a woman standing side-by-side. The man is on the left, wearing a dark jacket over a light shirt, dark pants, and dark shoes. The woman is on the right, wearing a dark top, dark pants, and dark shoes, and is holding a cigarette in her right hand. They are positioned in front of a dark background with some text visible above them.

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- 7 **O Samba/Brazil Classics II**—Various (Sire)
- 8 **Parisoweto**—Mahlatini & The Mahotella Queens (Polydor)
- 9 **Jive Hits of the Township**
Urban Africa Collection (Urban Africa/Polydor)
- 10 **Passion Sources**—Various (Real World)
- 11 **Estrangiero**—Caetano Veloso (Elektra)
- 12 **Beasts of No Nation**—Fela Anikulapo Kuti (Shanachie)
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- 14 **Mlah**—Les Negresses Vertes (Sire)
- 15 **Autobiography**—Duncan Dhu (Warner Bros.)
- 16 **Welela**—Miriam Makeba (Urban Africa/Polydor)
- 17 **Pamberi**—The Bhundu Boys (Mango)
- 18 **Orpheus Ascending**—Ivo Papasov & His Bulgarian Wedding Band (Hannibal)
- 19 **Pula's Fever**—Mano Negra (Virgin)
- 20 **Bambolero**—The Gipsy Kings (Elektra)



Compiled by:
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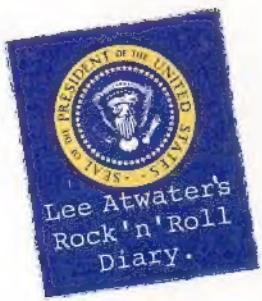
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April 5—Public reaction to my illness has been kind of disappointing, especially when you consider precedent. When President Reagan was in the hospital, the White House was deluged with 10,000 letters a day wishing him well. All I've received are three letters from direct mail inviting me to become a member of the Republican Inner Circle. At \$10,000, it's not cheap.

April 8—Watching CNN in bed today I started to drift off. I imagined that a whole bunch of people came to visit me in my hospital room. Elvis was there, John Lennon and Jim Morrison. I asked them if all the dirt was true. John said that when he was alive he had a \$1,000-a-day heroin habit and beat Yoko every night. He said he was an angry, violent man most of his life and treated his friends badly. Elvis said he was addicted to all kinds of things and never spent much time with his daughter. Jim Morrison said he was when he wrote *Horse Latitudes* that it was bad music and bad poetry, but he was in it for the money. I asked them what they were doing these days, and they all said they were in Heaven. That made me feel better.

Then I asked if I'd be joining them soon and John shook his head. When I asked why they went to Heaven and I wouldn't, John explained that they were in Rock'n'Roll Heaven. He said that both Hell and Rock'n'Roll Heaven look like Holiday Inns and are filled with screaming 15-year-old girls and loud music. The difference is that in Rock'n'Roll Heaven, your manager pays for any damage to your room.

April 12—The doctors say I'm cured, and I feel like a new man. Now that this harrowing ordeal is over, I can't wait to get back to work. My staff tells me that the Democrats moved up the date of the California primary to improve the chances of what Democratic Party Chairman Ron Brown is calling the "Havel ticket"—David Geffen and Bret Easton Ellis. The lengths to which some people will go to win an election amaze me. I asked Brown why they didn't choose a more traditionally Democratic ticket, and he said that John Updike and Philip Roth were booked solid at Breadloaf through 1994.

April 24—Asked the staff who we could find to compete with Geffen and Ellis, and all they could come up with was Charlton Heston and the guy who created "Miami Vice." I guess if things get really bad, there's always Ronald Reagan.

April 27—Talked to Ron Brown again today, and I guess the joke's on me. Turns out that the "Havel ticket" was an April Fool's memo that was leaked to the press by mistake. Brown expects the Democratic race will be between Cuomo, Jackson and Al Gore. Now, all I have to do is explain to Charlton Heston that he can't be President.

April 30—Heston took the news pretty well, all things considered. I explained to him that while he would be an excellent President, many people felt he lacked the experience to lead the country out of our present economic difficulties. Heston replied that he led the Children of Israel out of the Land of Egypt and talked to God on top of Mt. Sinai. I pointed out that Moses led the Children of Israel out of the Land of Egypt and talked he merely played Moses in a movie. He was a bit upset by this and pointed out that *Profiles in Courage* was written by Theodore Sorensen, but JFK got credit for it anyway. I told him that times had changed, and he said that was for sure: George Bush couldn't get a bit part in "Hellcats of the Navy" if his life depended on it.

McNeilly/Sipa Press



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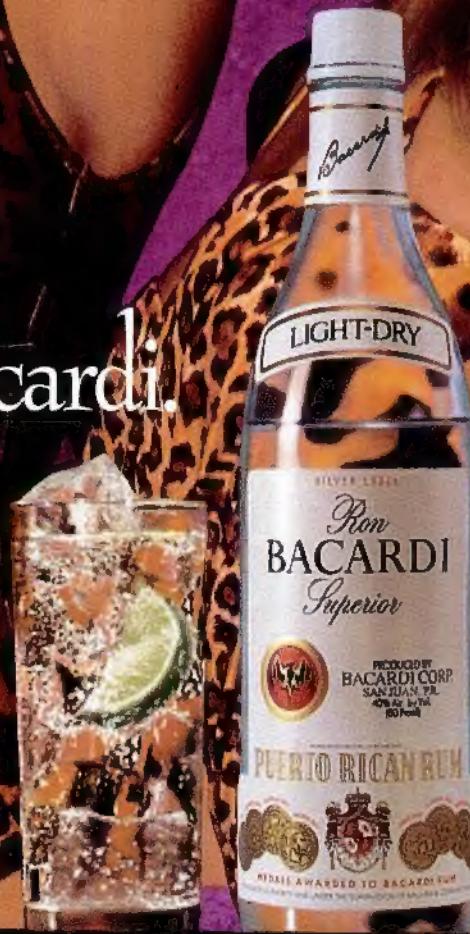
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